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TRAVELS

TO THE COAST OF

ARABIA FELIX:

AND FROM THENCE BY THE

RED-SEA AND EGYPT,

TO

EUROPE.

CONTAINING A SHORT ACCOUNT OF AN

EXPEDITION

UNDERTAKEN AGAINST THE

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS

BY HENRY ROOKE, ESQ;

LATE MAJOR OF THE 100th REGIMENT OF FOOT.

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ERRATA.

P. 11. l. 3. for " complement" read " complements."
P. 12. l. 25. for " ſeeming" read " ſeemingly."
P. 28. l. 20. for " fearlesly" read " fearleſsly."
P. 28. l. 30. for " group" read " groupe."
P. 65. l. 14. The ſtop after the word " deck;" to be placed after the word " contrivance."
P. 87. l. 16. for " ſarcophagos" read " ſarcophagus."

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CONTENTS.

J.U. 7-25-86

LETTER I.

Departure from Spithead — Iſland of Madeira — Trade Winds — Cape de Verd Iſlands — Anchor in Porto Praya — Deſcription of St. Jago and the Town of Praya.

LETTER II.

Attack made by Monſieur Suffrein — Diſadvantages under which the Britiſh Fleet laboured — Enemy beat off — Engliſh Fleet gives chaſe.

LETTER III.

Departure from St. Jago — Croſs the line — Trinidada — Object of the Expedition publickly notified — Capture of Dutch Ships in Saldanha Bay — Attack of the Cape judged inexpedient — Commodore returns to England — Arrival at Joanna.

LETTER

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LETTER IV.

Deſcription of the Iſland of Joanna — Viſits paid by the Princes to the different Ships — Good accommodations procured for us by the Dukes — Singular worſhip addreſſed to Birds — Flying Fox or African Bat — Prepare to ſail.

LETTER V.

Sickneſs in the Fleet — How accounted for — Fair Breeze for ſome time — Long Calm — Contrary Monſoon ſets in — Put into Morebat Bay — Deſcription thereof and of the Country — An Arabian Drawing-Room — Hookah — Fleets of Coaſting Veſſels.

LETTER VI.

Paſſage to Mocha — Deſcription of that City — Kingdom of Sunnaa — Military Genius of the Arabians — Exerciſe of the Cavalry — Gentoos — Champooing — Oppreſſive Government.

LETTER VII.

Paſſage to Hodeida — Iſle of Camaran — Battle with the Budoos — Cruelty of the Laſcars — Touch

Touch at Confidah — Arrive at Juddah — Deſcription of that place.

LETTER VIII.

Turkiſh Coffee Fleet — Their curious mode of Navigation — Journal kept on board the Mahaboube — Arrival at Suez.

LETTER IX.

Journey over the Deſert to Grand Cairo with a Caravan — Wretched fate of ſome Engliſh Merchants — Cruelty of the Government of Cairo towards them — Firman of the Grand Signor — Unpleaſant manner in which the Chriſtians are treated at Cairo.

LETTER X.

Excurſion to the Pyramids — Their Size — Apartments in the largeſt — Sphynx — Situation of the antient City of Memphis — Iſland of Rhoida — Mikeaz — Ceremony of the opening of the Chalitz — Deſcription of Cairo and the form of Government there.

LETTER XI.

Unpleaſant Adventure with Muſtapha Bey — Good Offices of Mr. R.——— — Interpoſition

—tion of Ibrahim Bey — The Paſſage by Suez moſt favorable for ſending Intelligence to India — Arabian Concert — Nightly Police of the City.

LETTER XII.

Paſſage down the Nile to Roſetta — Annual overflow of that River — Fertility of Lower Egypt — Roſetta — Caſtle of Bekier — Nicopolis — Alexandria — Ruinous ſtate of the antient City — Pompey's Pillar — Cleopatra's Obeliſk — Baths — Pharos — Alexander's Body preſerved there to the time of Auguſtus.

LETTER XIII.

Sail from Alexandria — Touch at Rhodes — Deſcription thereof — Archipelago — Iſland of Candia — Tunis — Antient City of Carthage — Ciſterns — Aquæduct — Embark for Leghorn — Arrival there.

TRAVELS

TO THE

COAST of ARABIA FELIX, &c.

LETTER I.

Porto Praya, April 13, 1781.

DEAR FRIEND,

THE gueſs proved right which you formed when I parted with you on the Beach at Portſmouth and the next morning's light brought with it a favorable wind. What a glorious ſight was the conſequence! near forty ſhips of the line with above an hundred others getting under way, the breeze freſh, the morning clear and pleaſant; did you ever behold ſo noble a ſpectacle? perhaps it might ſtrike *me* more forcibly, who was in the

midſt of that buſy ſcene than you who was, I ſuppoſe, a ſpectator of it from the Ramparts: I beheld it with a degree of enthuſiaſm; thoſe ſtupendous bulwarks managed with ſo much art, ſuch regularity in the midſt of ſo much apparent confuſion, the alacrity of my brave companions who were going forth to aſſert their own and their country's honor, the glorious events which ſo fine a force might produce; theſe and a thouſand other reflections of the like nature were occaſioned by this ſublime ſight.

The grand fleet deſtined for the relief of Gibraltar kept on it's courſe, while our little ſquadron brought up at St. Helen's for a few hours; the Commodore then made known his command by hoiſting a broad pendant, which could not fly when an Admiral's flag was in ſight: we weighed again in the afternoon and proceeded down Channel: The wind continued fair and paſſing the Lizard Lights on the third evening after our departure from Spithead we entered the Bay of Biſcay famous for its ſtorms, but found it of a more mild nature than we expected and had very little interruption to our good weather 'till we arrived off the Iſland of Madeira, when it became ſqually and tempeſtuous, and we then paſſed two or three very uncomfortable days: all our little amuſements, ſo neceſſary to cheat the tedious hours on board of ſhip, were at a ſtop;

ſtop; our card-table could not ſtand, the cheſs-men were ſwept off the board, we could neither read nor walk; our dinners exhibited ſcenes diſtreſſing and ludicrous; in ſhort you can conceive nothing ſo unpleaſant as the involuntary motions one muſt ſubmit to in a gale of wind: I found my cot the beſt reſource and ſpent moſt of my time in it till the fair weather returned; which, after three days ſufferings, we regained, and ſoon afterwards on coming within the tropick met with the trade winds, that blow always regularly and in the ſame direction. This phænomenon of the winds, which produces effects ſo uſeful to navigation and ſo pleaſing to the mariner, is accounted for by philoſophers on the principle of the ſun and earth's compound motion, as Dr. Halley and Sir Iſaac Newton can beſt explain to you. Having now a conſtant fair breeze and ſmooth water, our voyage became extremely pleaſant: we quickly arrived at the Cape-de-Verd Iſlands, and brought up in this Bay after a paſſage of four weeks from England. Water and refreſhments are the objects that have brought the fleet hither, of which we find a more plentiful ſupply than was expected: ſince the Commodore doubting whether there would be ſufficiency for the whole, has ſent a part to the Iſle of May, ſituated ten leagues to windward of this.

St. Jago, the iſland off which we are now anchored, is the principal of the Cape de Verds: they were diſcovered in 1449 by Antonio Nolli, a Genoeſe, in the ſervice of Portugal, and are ten in number, laying between 15 and 17 N. L. 18 and 20 W. L. from London; they abound in moſt tropical productions, but from the indolence of the natives and bad management yield very little: the excluſive trade to them and likewiſe to the coaſt of Guinea is veſted in a company at Liſbon, who pay an annual ſum to the government, but not ſufficient for the expence of maintaining the forts and garriſons, as the wretched condition of them ſeems to indicate. The chief town of the iſland is ſituated cloſe to the ſea, and is ten miles diſtant from this place; the road that leads to it is very narrow and ſtony, up and down craggy hills, along which a jack-aſs or poney conveys one with tolerable ſafety. The face of the country preſents an appearance of brown parched and barren hills, ſeeming to have been formed by lava and volcanic fire; moſt of them terminate in a point like the *apex* of a volcano; the vallies are fertile and if cultivated would amply repay the pains of the huſbandman: at preſent they produce trees and ſhrubs of various kinds, which grow ſpontaneouſly, ſuch as the cocoa-nut, tamarind, orange, guava, lime, plantane, &c. but the plant of moſt conſequence is madder, growing in great abundance among the cliffs.

You

You descend to the town of St. Jago down the declivity of a mountain, almost perpendicular, by a rugged and zig-zag path, with a precipice on each side; the town stands encompass'd by hills towards the land; it seems to have been formerly a place of consequence, but is now in a ruinous and desolate condition, with few other inhabitants but negroes and no trade; the blacks came originally from the coast of Guinea, and are very tall and robust: they adorn themselves with a profusion of beads, which they wear in form of necklaces and bracelets, and in their ears large gold and silver rings. The cathedral has a respectable appearance, standing very boldly on a cliff that overhangs the sea; there is likewise a convent of Capucins, a pretty good building and pleasantly situated; the holy fathers place before strangers who visit them the best cheer their house affords.

Allow me to bring you back from the capital to the town of Praya, composed of a few mud hovels, standing on a cliff above the landing place; a battery of rusty guns and a flag-staff constitute it a fort; the officer who commands here is what the Portugueze call a *Capitano Mor*; he is a kind of commandant and directs the police, militia, and revenue. In the valley below the town of Praya are two wells, from whence our fleet is watered; they yield a pretty copious

copious ſupply thereof, though it is rather of an indifferent quality; the furtheſt well from the ſea produces the beſt; other refreſhments are likewiſe plentiful here, ſuch as bullocks, goats, hogs, poultry, eggs, oranges, plantanes, cocoa nuts and other fruits; theſe the natives bring to market, and exchange for old clothes, ſhirts, blankets, &c. commodities they value more than ſpecie; from this traffic, which they carry on with all ſtrangers that touch here, you ſee the faſhions of almoſt every nation in Europe diſplay'd in the coats, hats and other parts of the dreſſes of theſe negroes, who make rather a fantaſtical appearance from the variety and ſhabbineſs of their European habiliments. This valley is thickly planted with cocoa nut, tamarind, and other trees, forming a pleaſant grove; and interſperſed amongſt them are ſeveral officers tents; great numbers of ſoldiers and ſailors are on ſhore to fill the water-caſks and buy proviſions; our fair countrywomen make it their *Promenade* and enliven the ſcene. An houſe belonging to the Liſbon Company is on the verge of the grove and extremely convenient for our *Fêtes*; amidſt the conviviality of which we forget the ſavage aſpect of the land we are on and bear more patiently the raging heat of a vertical ſun. As our ſhips, which were ſent to the Iſle of May are expected to join us here tomorrow, we ſhall moſt probably ſail from hence

on

on the following day—You may ſuppoſe we are not a little anxious to know our deſtination: wherever it is, I am perſuaded we have your beſt wiſhes for ſucceſs and a proſperous campaign. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Porto Praya, May 1, 1781.

DEAR FRIEND.

OUR campaign has opened ſomewhat ſooner than we expected. While at anchor under the ſanction of the Portugueze flag we thought ourſelves equally ſecure from inſult as if at St. Helen's, we were ſuddenly attack'd by a French ſquadron in a manner we little dreamed of and for which we were by no means prepared.

The point of this Bay to windward being high land and ſtretching pretty far out conceals from us every thing approaching on that ſide 'till it comes very near: under cover of this blind the enemy advanced, nor did we ſuſpect the miſchief that thus threatened us till on drawing near the point they opened to the Iſis, which lay the furtheſt out in the Bay, and

ſhe

ſhe immediately made the ſignal for diſcovering ſtrange ſhips. They proved to be a French fleet under convoy of five ſail of the line and a corvette, commanded by Monſ. de Suffrein, *Chef d'Eſcadre*, and were compoſed of the Heros and Hannibal of ſeventy-four guns each, the Sphynx, Arteſien, and Vengeur all of ſixty-four; they advanced very faſt on our ſquadron with a great deal of ſail ſet, and being gallantly lead by their Commodore into the center of our fleet began to engage us. Monſ. Suffrein in the Heros came to an anchor, as did the Hannibal his *matelot*; a ſpirited proceeding this, you'll ſay, to bring up in the midſt of an enemy's fleet; but I fancy he made his calculations on ſurprizing us, and the event juſtified them. The conduct which the other three ſhips obſerved I cannot account for, unleſs finding our Indiamen on the outſide they miſtook them at firſt for men of war, though in that they muſt ſoon have been undeceived: I ſhould think they would have co-operated more effectually with their Commodore, had they, like him, come to an anchor and directed all their efforts againſt our men of war; a plan more worthy of them than that of ſailing about in the out-ſkirts of the fleet and making attacks on the Indiamen, in one of which only they ſucceeded, boarding and carrying out with them the Hinchingbrooke; but in an attempt of the like nature on the Fortitude were gallantly beat off, and

met with a vigorious reſiſtance from moſt of the others: had they, owing to the aukward ſituation and unprepared ſtate of our men of war, been able to make any impreſſion on them, the convoy muſt have fallen of courſe. You will ſuppoſe that the two French ſhips in the midſt of our fleet had a pretty warm birth, they were the objects for almoſt every one to fire at, and not a ſingle victualler that mounted ſix four-pounders but directed them that way: from ſo general a fire they ſuffered conſiderably, and after ſtanding the brunt of it for near two hours retired from the fight much ſhattered; the Hannibal was particularly ill-treated, and in its retreat had ſcarce clear'd our fleet before her three maſts and bowſprit went overboard; ſhe was indeed a compleat wreck; her companions bore down to her aſſiſtance, and one of them took her in tow: we agreed that it would have been a more pleaſing ſight to have beheld an Engliſh man of war perform that charitable office: the French then went off to leeward after their convoy.

We have to lament ſome of our friends who fell in the action, and about two hundred men killed and wounded; a loſs, I fancy, far inferior to that of the enemy, who made their attack with great ſpirit, it muſt be confeſs'd, but at the ſame time with little judgment, the want of which on their parts, with firmneſs and exertion on ours, united

to

to ſave us in a poſition ſo extremely diſadvantageous. Many of our ſhips had not above half their complement on board: the fleet was anchor'd without any order or regularity, merchantmen on the outſide, men of war within; not above one or two had time to get ſprings on their cables, and lay likewiſe ſo much in each other's way that ſome could not bring their guns to bear upon the enemy and others in the confuſion fired upon their friends.

How different this from what might have been the caſe if we had paid attention to the intelligence received on ſhore and made proper arrangements. We found by the Port book at Praya, (containing the names, countries, and deſcriptions of all ſhips arriving here) that a French frigate came into the Bay to water but a few weeks before and apprized the inhabitants of this fleet which ſhe ſaid would touch at Praya to refreſh in the courſe of the month of April, deſiring them to have cattle and every thing ready; and the people of the iſland ſo fully expected the French fleet, that when ours appeared they concluded it to be that of which the frigate had given them notice. All this we learned on our arrival, and had we in conſequence thereof kept a look out to windward, had our men of war been moor'd head and ſtern with ſprings on their cables and formed in a line on the outſide the convoy being within; had all our people been on board and the

ſhips properly clear'd for action for which they would in that caſe have received timely notice, it is to be preſumed that we ſhould have been able to have given a better account of our own ſucceſs and the enemy's loſs: but who could ſuppoſe that the French, famous for their faith and their *etiquette*, would violate the neutrality of a Port and attack us laying ſupinely at anchor under protection of the Portugueze flag? I marvel much whether theſe violators of the law of nations would have ſcrupled to have taken our ſhips, had they found them in the disjointed ſtate they were in but a day or two before, when half were watering at the Iſle of May, the other half in Porto Praya; and when thus ſeparately attacked they could have made but a feeble defence and the greater part muſt inevitably have fallen. A manifeſto from the Court of Liſbon might have been the conſequence, but I hardly think it would have procured reſtitution.

I ſhould be glad to give you the ſequel of this hiſtory, but having told you that in about two hours after the enemy had retreated in a confuſed and ſhattered condition, our men of war went out of the Bay ſeeming in good order and were ſaluted on all ſides by the cheers and acclamations of a brave and ſpirited fleet, in which I dare ſay there was not a man who did not envy them that victory he truſted they were about to gain: I ſay after telling you

you this, allow me to draw a veil over what followed, and consign to oblivion St. Jago and our atchievements off that island; the gazette will probably explain the remaining transactions of the day and I leave you to your own comments on the occasion. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER III.

Joanna, one of the Comora Iſlands.
Sept. 3, 1781.

DEAR FRIEND.

WHITHER have you now conducted me! Methinks I hear you exclaim on reading the date of this. Where is this ſame Joanna, and theſe Comora Iſlands from whence you now announce yourſelf? In what quarter of the globe are they? or, in what corner of my map can I diſcover them? Thus will you queſtion me, if you are not better acquainted with their ſituation than I was till of late. Know then, that they are iſlands in the Indian Ocean, whoſe longitude is 45° eaſt from London, latitude 12° ſouth; are five in number, Joanna, Mayotta, Mohilla, Angazeia and Comora; that we have now touched here to take in water and refreſhments in our way to India, where we are bound. By what means, and

and through what adventures we have paſſed on to this length, the event of our ſecret expedition, &c. you ſhall briefly learn.

After leaving St. Jago our fancies and wiſhes were continually employed in deviſing what could be the object of our expedition and flattering ourſelves with a ſpeedy accompliſhment of it. The two places between which our thoughts vibrated were Buenos Ayres, and the Cape of Good Hope; it proved to be the latter; of that we were fully certified on making the iſland of Trinadada ſituated in latitude 20° ſouth, longitude 29° weſt from London. We arrived off that iſland after a month's paſſage from St. Jago; when near the line we had much calm, and the weather was exceſſively hot, the thermometer being generally 88. our people of courſe were beginning to grow ſickly; however, in about 4° north we met with the ſouth-eaſt trade wind, which prevails in the ſouthern tropick, and freſhening by degrees it revived us from the languor occaſioned by the calm and ſultry weather ſending us acroſs the equinoctial line May 20th. This event produced the uſual ceremony of ducking ſuch as had never before paſſed it which is performed by a tackle fixed to the main yard arm, by means whereof the perſon ducked is lowered into the ſea and there plunged three times; but the forfeit of a bottle of brandy exempts thoſe who do not

chuſe

chuſe to undergo the diſcipline; the crew amuſe themſelves with various ſports on this occaſion, to which the grog ariſing from forfeits much contributes. Trinidada had been appointed a place of rendezvous in caſe of ſeparation, but all our ſhips had kept together, and on our arrival there the object of the expedition was publickly notified. The Cape of Good Hope now engroſſed the whole of our thoughts and converſation, we looked forwards to it with pleaſure as the period of our voyage, formed our different plans of attack and flattered ourſelves that a few weeks would put us into poſſeſſion of that delightful ſettlement; but vain were all our hopes, and the evil genius that viſited us at St. Jago came again acroſs us and forbad our entrance into Falſe Bay, as the ſequel ſhall explain.

On the twelfth of June the Commodore ſent forwards two frigates and two cutters to reconnoitre the Cape, examine the poſture of defence of the enemy and diſcover whether the French ſquadron was arrived there; theſe, on their paſſage took an outward-bound Dutch Indiaman which had juſt left Saldanha Bay and was bound to Ceylon; from the accounts received thereby and letters found on board, it was diſcovered, that the French fleet arrived in Falſe Bay on the 21ſt of June; that they had even brought the ſhattered

ſhattered Hannibal with them by great exertions, having towed her moſt part of the way; that all neceſſary preparations were made for our reception and they were in daily expectation of the viſit.

The reſolution formed in conſequence of this intelligence was, not to attempt the Cape; and our famous expedition, from which ſo much was expected, tamely terminated in the capture of ſome Dutch Indiamen that we ſurprized in Saldanha Bay on the twenty-firſt of July: they attempted to ſet fire to their ſhips, but ſucceeded only in burning one; moſt of the people made their eſcape on ſhore, a few only coming over to us among whom were two diſtinguiſhed perſonages, no leſs than a King and the Prince his ſon, who threw themſelves on our protection, rejoiced at having gained their liberty after a captivity of ſixteen years on Robin Iſland laying near that coaſt. Their crime againſt the Dutch was, the having oppoſed them at Ternate one of the Moluccas, of which the old man was king. As we had been expected at the Cape for ſome time before, theſe royal captives were ſent on board the Indiamen we took to be conveyed to Holland; thoſe very ſhips had alſo been ſent round from the Cape into Saldanha Bay as a place of ſecurity during the expected attack; it was from the prize taken at ſea that we gained intelligence of them.

Saldanha is perhaps one of the fineſt Bays in the world; it branches into three or four, the inner one where the prizes were laying is called Hotties Bay; it is compleatly land-lock'd, ſecure, and large enough to contain two or three hundred ſail: the ſurrounding country is formed by wild uncultivated hills and plains covered thick with ſhrubs, the only inhabitants thereabouts are tygers, antelopes, deer, and quantities of game: did it but yield good water, it would be a more eligible place than the Cape for ſhipping and refreſhments, but the want thereof is the reaſon that no ſettlement has been formed there.

The whole country being one continued ſhrubbery preſents an extenſive field for the reſearches of a botaniſt; there are a vaſt number of plants growing wild which are foſtered with much care in Engliſh green-houſes; the air was perfumed with their fragrance; the climate is as ſoft and mild as that of Montpellier or Naples, for though it was the depth of winter, the air was quite clear, and ſun extremely warm, the thermometer being at 60. but we were allowed only a ſhort time to enjoy the pleaſures of this ſhore and climate, quitting it after a three days ſtay and regretting much that our viſit to the ſouthern promontory of Africa was of ſo tranſitory a nature, where our imaginations had painted to us the acquiſition of ſome honour and much pleaſure. By all

ac-

accounts it is a delightful ſettlement. The Cape Town is repreſented to be neatly and regularly built: the adjacent country mountainous towards the ſea, but in land beautifully diverſified with villas, vineyards, and plantations, the climate remarkably fine, and favorable to fruits and vegetables of all kinds, which, as well as every other ſort of proviſions, are extremely plentiful. The inhabitants are hoſpitable, of plain and eaſy manners, and much attached to the Engliſh, with whom they are greatly connected in time of peace, as our Indiamen generally touch there for refreſhment, and in that point of view only it would have been a moſt deſirable acquiſition to us, and I fear we ſhall have great reaſon to regret the failure of this expedition during our war with the Dutch.

The Commodore continued with us for two or three days only after we left Saldanha Bay and then returned to England, taking with him two fifties and two frigates, the reſt of the force is proceeding to India; and in our way thither we have touched here for water and refreſhments, having been four months on our paſſage from St. Jago. This iſland appears very pleaſant and inviting, in fact it is land, and *that* is no ſmall recommendation. I mean to viſit it to-morrow and ſhall defer a more particular account till my next. Adieu.

LETTER IV.

Joanna Town, September 23, 1781.

DEAR FRIEND.

THOUGH this is not the largeſt yet it may be reckon'd the principal of the Comora Iſlands; it claims ſovereignty over and exacts tribute from all the others: theſe pretenſions it is however ſometimes obliged to aſſert by the ſword and at preſent meditates an expedition againſt Mayotta which is in a ſtate of rebellion; the natives on being aſked the cauſe of their war with that people, reply "Mayotta like America:" they get their ſupplies of arms and ammunition from ſhips that touch here, and the arrival of ſo large a fleet as the preſent will prove very ſeaſonable to them, as it is cuſtomary for all to make preſents of arms and powder to the Prince when he pays a viſit on board which he does to every one; a ſalute is the compliment due on that occaſion,

but

but as our guns are ſhotted an apology is made for the omiſſion of that ceremony, and the Prince readily admits of it provided he receives a number of cartridges equal to the guns that would have been fired.

The King lives at a Town about twelve miles off on the eaſt ſide of the iſland, two Princes of the blood reſide here; on going their round of viſits they fail not to aſk for every thing they ſee which ſtrikes their fancy, and of courſe the honor of making a preſent to a Prince, induces one at firſt readily to grant what they requeſt; but no ſooner is that done than they make freſh applications till we are reduced to the rude neceſſity of putting the negative on moſt of them. Theſe great perſonages are very richly dreſſed and attended by a numerous ſuite of ſlaves, who like their princely maſters are much ſtruck with the objects they ſee but uſe leſs ceremony in their manner of obtaining them: Theſe black Princes (for that is the complexion of them and all the inhabitants) have by ſome means or other obtained the titles of Prince of Wales and Prince Will, the former has, I ſuppoſe, been jocoſely called ſo by ſome Engliſhmen as being the heir apparent and the natives have adopted the term, not the only one they borrow from us; they have an officer ſtiled Purſer Jack who ſeems to be at the head of the finance-department; of dukes they have a prodigious

digious number, who entertain us at their hotels for a dollar per day and give us for dinner very good rice and curry; these noblemen, together with a numerous tribe of others of all ranks, make the earliest application to every one to solicit the honor of his company and custom, even before the ship has let go its anchor they come along side in their canoes and produce written certificates of their honesty and abilities from those who have been here before, the purport of which is to inform you that the bearer has given them good cheer, washed their linen well and supplied their ship punctually with all sorts of refreshments. The effect is striking and singular on entering the road to see a vast number of canoes which are made of trunks of trees hollowed out with three or four black fellows in each, their faces turned towards the front of the canoe, with paddles formed like a spade, digging away in the water and moving with no small velocity: to keep these cockle-shells steady and prevent them from over-setting, they have what is termed an out-rigger, it is composed of two poles laid across the upper part of the canoe and extending several feet beyond the edges thereof on each side, joined at the extremities by two flat pieces of wood, so that it appears like a square frame laid across the canoe: they are very long but so narrow that one person only can sit breadthways. The price of every article here is regulated

regulated and each ſhip has it's contractor who engages to ſupply it with neceſſaries at the eſtabliſhed rate, but I believe it is in many caſes exceeded by the great demand and the eagerneſs of half-ſtarved people to obtain freſh ſtock.

We find no other animals for our ſea proviſions but bullocks, goats and fowls, the ſeaſon for oranges is paſt, but we get moſt other tropical fruits and whatever we want, have only to give in a liſt to a duke and he provides us therewith: This, you will ſay, is a new character for a duke to appear in and ſuch it ſeems to be, but it is in fact only owing to the mode, they are their own ſtewards and diſpoſe of the produce of their eſtates themſelves, which noblemen of other countries do by the intermediate aid of an agent: they at leaſt act conſiſtent with their characters by an urbanity of manners which one is ſurprized to meet with in a people inhabiting a ſmall ſpot ſecluded from the reſt of the civilized world. They have a regular form of government and exerciſe the Mahometan religion; both were introduced by Arabians whopaſſed over from the continent and ſubdued the country; the original Joanna natives are by no means thoroughly reconcil'd to this uſurpation and ſtill look upon their conquerors with an evil eye. Like their ſentiments ſo are the colours of theſe two races of men very different, the Arabs have not ſo deep a tinge as

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the others, being of a yellowiſh copper complexion with better features and a more animated countenance, they conſider a black ſtreak under the eyes and black teeth as ornamental, the former they make every day at their toilettes with a painting bruſh dipt in a kind of ointment, the latter is principally cauſed by the chewing of the betel nut: this cuſtom which prevails in all Eaſtern countries anſwers to the faſhion of ſmoking tobacco or taking ſnuff with us, except that with them it is more general, no one is without a purſe or bag of betel and it is looked on as a piece of civility to offer it to your friend when you meet him or take leave; it is a ſmall nut of the ſize of a filberd that grows on a creeping plant like a vine; together with the betel nut are chewed the leaves of the areca (a kind of palm tree) and a ſmall quantity of *chinam* or lime, made of calcined ſhells, is added.

Their religion licenſes a plurality of wives and likewiſe concubines; they are extremely jealous of them and never allow any man to ſee the women, but female ſtrangers are admitted into the Harem, and ſome Engliſh ladies, whoſe curioſity has lead them there make favourable reports of their beauty and richneſs of apparel diſplayed in a profuſion of ornaments of gold, ſilver, and beads, in form of necklaces bracelets

lets and ear-rings, they wear half a dozen or more in each through holes bored all along the outer rim of the ear.

The men ſeem not to look with an eye of indifference on our fair countrywomen notwithſtanding they are of ſo different a complexion; one of the firſt rank among them being much ſmitten with an Engliſh young lady wiſhed to make a purchaſe of her at the price of five thouſand dollars, but on being informed that the lady would fetch at leaſt twenty times that ſum in India, he lamented that her value was ſo far ſuperior to what he could afford to give.

Theſe people are very temperate and abſtemious, wine being forbidden them by the law of Mahomet, but that prophet ſeems to have had leſs compaſſion on his followers when he enjoined them the faſt of Ramazan, laſting for a month, during which they never taſte of any thing from ſun-riſe to ſun-ſet; it is now about half over and with ſurprize we ſee them every day toiling in the heat of the ſun, nor will the greateſt thirſt they can ſuffer juſtify the bare wetting the lips. They are frequent in prayer, attending their moſques three or four times a day; we are allowed to enter them on condition of taking off our ſhoes. Theſe buildings are regular but quite plain; in prayer they proſtrate themſelves on the ground frequently kiſſing it and expreſſing very fervent devotion: the computation of time (which is dated from their pro-

phet Mahomet) is termed the Higera, of which the preſent year is the 1195th; their new year begins September 14th: but I need not trouble you with a recital of all the laws of the Alcoran which you have moſt likely read.

The town from whence I date this is cloſe to the ſea, ſituated at the foot of a very high hill, and about a mile and a half in circuit; the houſes are incloſed either with high ſtone walls or palings made with a kind of reed, and the ſtreets are little narrow alleys extremely intricate and forming a perfect labyrinth; the better kind of houſes are built of ſtone within a court-yard, have a portico to ſhield them from the ſun, and one long and lofty room where they receive gueſts, the other apartments are ſacred to the women; the ſides of their rooms are covered with a number of ſmall mirrors, bits of china ware and other little ornaments that they procure from ſhips which come here to refreſh: the moſt ſuperb of them are furniſhed with cane ſophas covered with chintz and ſattin mattreſſes: moſt of the people ſpeak a little Engliſh, they profeſs a particular regard for our nation and are very fond of repeating to you that "Joanna-man and Engliſh-man all brothers," and never fail to aſk "how King George do?" In general they appear to be a courteous and well diſpoſed people and very fair and honeſt in their dealings, though there are amongſt them as in all other nations ſome viciouſly inclined and theft

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is much practiſed by the lower claſs, notwithſtanding the puniſhment of it is very exemplary, being amputation of both hands of the delinquent.

The inhabitants of this iſland, like thoſe of moſt hot and tropical countries, are indolent and do not improve by their labour the richneſs of that ſoil with which nature has bleſt them: climate here favours vegetation to ſuch a degree as requires little toil in the huſbandman but that little is denied, ſo that beyond oranges, bananas, pine-apples, cocoa nuts, yams and purſlain, (all growing ſpontaneouſly,) few vegetables are met with; nor are the natural beauties of the iſland inferior to its other advantages of plenty and fertility, the face of the country is very pictureſque and pleaſing, its ſcenes are drawn by the bold ſtrokes of nature's maſterly pencil: lofty mountains cloathed to their very ſummits; deep and rugged vallies adorned by frequent cataracts and caſcades; woods, rocks and rivulets intermixed in "gay theatric pride" form the landſcape: groves are ſeen extending over the plains, to the very edge of the ſea, formed principally by cocoa-nut trees, whoſe long and naked ſtems leave a clear uninterrupted paſſage beneath, while their tufted and overſpreading tops form a thick ſhade above, and keep off the ſcorching rays of the ſun; in

theſe we pitch our tents and enjoy a ſhort relief from the *ennui* of a tedious voyage.

In the interior part of the iſland ſurrounded by mountains of a prodigious height and about fifteen miles from this town is ſituated a ſacred lake half a mile in circumference, the adjacent hills covered with lofty trees and the unfrequented ſolitude of the place ſeem more calculated to inſpire religious awe in thoſe who viſit this ſequeſtered ſpot, than any ſanctity that is to be diſcovered in a parcel of wild ducks inhabiting it which are deified and worſhipped by the original natives, who conſult them as their oracles on all important affairs and ſacrifice to them: being extremely averſe to conduct ſtrangers there, they ſtipulate that all guns ſhall be left at a place five miles from the lake; the worſhip paid to theſe birds enſures their ſafety and tranquillity, and rendering them of courſe perfectly tame they fearleſly approach any one who goes there: the Arabian part of the iſlanders hold this barbarous ſuperſtition in the utmoſt deteſtation, but dare not forbid the practice of it, ſo bigotted to it are the others.

This iſland produces no great variety of birds or beaſts; amongſt the former the Madagaſcar Bat is the moſt curious on account of its ſize and form, its dimenſions between the extremities of

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each wing when extended are near a yard and of its body from the tip of the noſe to the tail about nine inches, the wings are of the ſame texture as thoſe of the common bat, but the body is covered with a furr exactly of the colour and quality of that of a fox to which animal it bears likewiſe a perfect reſemblance in its head, and for that reaſon ſome call it the flying fox; they abound on the coaſt of Africa and in the iſland of Madagaſcar, where they are much larger than here; they are ſaid to be of a very voracious nature and to deſtroy fowls and other domeſtic animals.

The heat is very great at preſent and the thermometer near 90; our ſcorbutic men have found the benefit of ſhore and are tolerably recovered; all are embarked to-day and preparations made for our departure to morrow, when, if the wind permits, we ſhall be again launched into the dreary ocean and with good luck may expect to ſee the Indian ſhores in ſix weeks, a mere nothing of time to us who have paſſed ſix months at ſea, but I dare ſay is more than you ever wiſh to ſpend on that joyleſs element. Adieu.

LETTER V.

Morebat Bay, Dec. 1, 1781.

DEAR FRIEND.

WE are, I believe, doomed to wander over the whole face of the ocean and never to arrive at our deſtin'd port; to moulder away in inactivity and loſe by ſickneſs thoſe lives, which it is true we owe to our country, but we ſhould wiſh for her ſake and our own to pay rather in the field than tamely on the ſea.

Our loſs has been very great ſince we left Joanna, an epidemical fever having raged in the fleet which has carried off a great number of officers and men; people will tell you that this has proceeded from a particular malignity in the air of Joanna; but I fancy it is no more than that particular malignity prevailing in all hot countries where there is much wood and where of courſe the night dews are very plentiful, theſe are always pernicious to men whoſe occupations and duty oblige them to be

be expoſed to their effect. One valley in particular proved very fatal to them that fixed their reſidence in it; thoſe natural beauties of which it boaſted, formed by a thick grove of cocoa-nut trees through which a limpid ſtream murmured and glided to the ſea in gentle mæanders, ſerved but as a decoy deſtructive to ſuch as were thereby enticed into its boſom; and that it was a more unhealthy ſpot than any other muſt be owing to its being more covered with trees, and by that means more ſubject to the putrid and ſtagnant vapour found ſo baleful.

Phyſicians who write on the diſeaſes of Europeans in hot climates recommend it to people who touch at places in theſe latitudes, for the purpoſe of refreſhment, to ſleep always on board of ſhip, and it would have been more prudent in us to have conformed to their directions in that inſtance, ſince the ſickneſs which has carried off ſo many affected thoſe principally who ſlept on ſhore, amongſt whom I happened unluckily to be, for tired with my long captivity on the ſea, I could not reſiſt the temptation of land, and lived entirely on the iſland, but have paid ſeverely for it by the loſs of my health which ever ſince has been on the decline.

During the firſt month after our leaving Joanna we received almoſt every day the melancholy tidings

tidings of ſome friend's death, and in our viſits from ſhip to ſhip hardly recognized others from their pale and emaciated appearance, beholding with ſorrow

" To infant weakneſs ſunk the warrior's arm,
" The lip pale-quivering and the beamleſs eye.
" Heard nightly plung'd amid the ſullen waves
" The frequent corſe: while on each other fix'd
" In ſad preſage the blank aſſiſtants ſeem'd
" Silent to aſk, whom Fate would next demand."

THOMSON.

At the ſame time that I lament this mortality which raged in our little army, allow me to animadvert on what in my opinion has been more than the noxious air of Joanna, a cauſe of the misfortune, namely the crowded and confined ſituation of our people on board of ſhip. The tranſports commonly made uſe of for the accommodation of troops are more calculated to deſtroy than preſerve health, which can certainly be attributed to no other cauſe than the difficulty of procuring ſhips, for no pains or expence ought to be ſpared to promote ſo eſſential a point as the preſervation of the men. Did not humanity dictate ſuch a conſideration, œconomy ought to point out the neceſſity of ſaving thoſe lives which are replaced at ſo great an expence, greater than *that* would be of giving the troops better and more roomy

roomy tranſports; and by this means, ſaving half that periſh at ſea: but this ſhould only be a ſecondary thought; the value of a Britiſh Soldier ought to be the firſt. In voyages of a moderate length, the health of the men may be better preſerved on ſhipboard than on ſhore, provided they have room, good air, and wholeſome proviſions; care of officers may give every thing elſe; but their utmoſt efforts can never keep the men in health where thoſe requiſites are wanting. It has been our misfortune, though going on ſo long a voyage, to have only the ſame allowance of tonnage that thoſe have, which are bound to America or the Weſt Indies, viz. two ton per man, abundantly too ſmall for them, what then muſt it be for us going to India? This miſchief has been plainly pointed out by ſeveral ſhips that have been extremely ſickly till near half their complements were buried, and after that, became as healthy: we might learn from this fatal experience, what quantity of tonnage would be proper for ſuch a number of men. If therefore, we value the lives of our ſoldiers, and wiſh them to be landed compleat and fit for ſervice in thoſe countries to which they are ſent, we ought to give them a better conveyance than at preſent, and take into the ſervice, ſhips more proper for that purpoſe: the deck on which the men lay, ought to be pierced fore and aft; and by that means a conſtant current of air would keep it ſweet and

clean, an advantage not to be obtained in our preſent ſtyle of tranſports, whoſe lower decks are peſtilential dungeons, and even on whoſe upper ones, from the number of men conſtantly there during the day-time, the air is putrid and unwholſome. Large ſhips are the fitteſt for troop-tranſports, for many reaſons; but chiefly, becauſe diſcipline and their duty, can there beſt be taught to the men, which, by amuſing the mind and exerciſing the body, preſerve both in health and vigor. If for the purpoſe of expedition, coppered ſhips ſhould be made uſe of, great care muſt be taken that a quantity of water be let into them every day, and pumped out again, otherwiſe, as thoſe ſhips are extremely tight, the bilge water will corrupt, and render the air putrid: nor ſhould the men ever be ſuffered to tow their meat over-board, ſince by rubbing againſt the ſides of the ſhip, it contracts ſome of the bad quality of the copper, and is very injurious.

But to return to our voyage: the firſt three weeks from Joanna, gave us the earneſt of a ſpeedy arrival at Bombay, a favourable breeze continually befriending us; but at the expiration of that time, reſigned us to calms, currents, and contrary winds, which have been our portion ever ſince: during a whole month while the heat was exceſſive in about 10. north latitude, we experienced one continued calm; nor was that the worſt that befell us,

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for the currents drove us conſiderably out of our courſe; and, when at length a breeze ſprung up, it was directly contrary, and certified us of the ſhifting of the monſoon, which in theſe ſeas takes place about the latter end of October: this is the name given to thoſe periodical winds that blow in the Indian ocean ſix months from N. E. or thereabouts, and the other ſix months from the oppoſite points: we contended for a long time with this contrary wind; but as we rather loſt than gained way, and began to ſtand in need of water and refreſhments, we bore away for this bay, and came in here November 27th; and it is much doubted whether the fleet, in which are many heavy and bad ſailing ſhips, will be able to make good its paſſage to India till March or April, when the ſoutherly moonſoon ſets in.

Chance could hardly have directed us to a more unpleaſant or miſerable place than Morebat; the country here, does not refreſh the eye with a ſingle vegetable production, but barren hills and ſandy plains are the only objects to be ſeen; of fruits it yields none, and of cattle, only a few half-ſtarved goats and bullocks, not larger than maſtiff-dogs; the water we procure is little better than a diſtillation of the ſea water, which by oozing through the ſand, looſes ſome of its ſalt particles; and to get it, we are obliged to ſink

wells. Yet theſe bleſſings of life, ſuch as I deſcribe them, draw down upon the natives, the Budoos or wild Arabs, who inhabit the mountains: what then muſt *their* ſituation be, when they envy the people of Morebat, the little they poſſeſs? or where can the attachment to the *natale ſolum*, be more ſtrongly ſhown than by theſe people who will fight to defend a country, one thinks it would be a happineſs to be deprived of? From the frequent incurſions which the Budoos make into this diſtrict, the inhabitants are kept on a perpetual *qui vive*; and from their conſtant ſtate of warfare, have acquired a ferocity of look and manner, which makes them at leaſt appear terrible; they have long ragged black hair, which they collect in a knot at the top of their heads; are naked, except a rug about their middle, and carry either a lance or match-lock gun; in marching to and from battle, they go in a rank, and before them dance ſome warriors, ſinging at the ſame time diſcordant airs, and claſhing their ſhields and arms.

Abdallah Ben Homed the Noqueeb or Chief of Morebat, is now languiſhing with ſome wounds he received in battle, and lays ſtretched on a pallet in the corner of a gloomy cellar, which is his *ſalle d'audience*, where we are introduced to him, and ſeat ourſelves on the ground

ground to take coffee with him and his generals, while the Hookah paſſes round; this is a pipe of a ſingular and complicated conſtruction, through which tobacco is ſmoked: out of a ſmall veſſel of a globular form, and nearly full of water, iſſue two tubes, one perpendicularly, on which is placed the tobacco; the other, obliquely from the ſide of the veſſel, and to that the perſon who ſmokes, applies his mouth; the ſmoke by this means being drawn through water, is cooled in its paſſage, and rendered more grateful: one takes a whiff, draws up a large quantity of ſmoke, puffs it out of his noſe and mouth in an immenſe cloud, and paſſes the hookah to his neighbour; and thus it goes round the whole circle. The hookah is known and uſed throughout the Eaſt; but in thoſe parts of it where the refinements of life prevail more than at Morebat, every one has his hookah ſacred to himſelf; and it is frequently an implement of a very coſtly nature, being of ſilver, and ſet with precious ſtones: in the better kind, that tube which is applied to the mouth is very long and pliant; and for that reaſon is termed the ſnake: people who uſe it in a luxurious manner, fill the veſſel through which the ſmoke is drawn with roſe water, and it thereby receives ſome of the fragrant quality of that fluid.

The interior part of the country is occupied by Budoos, jackalls and wild dogs; all which deſcend

ſcend to prey on the ſandy plains of Morebat. Would you think, that of all countries, this unhappy place ſhould be ſituated on the coaſt of happy Arabia? If one may judge of it from the ſpecimen here exhibited, no term was ever more miſapplied, where the country is deſtitute of every vegetable production, the natives of every rational enjoyment.

Large fleets of Arabian veſſels are daily paſſing full of pilgrims going to Mecca, and merchandiſe brought from Muſcat, Buſſora, and other places on the coaſt, being bound for Mocha and Juddah in the Red Sea; the paſſage to the former place from hence, is but about ten days; and the eaſy tranſition to Europe by that route, will I believe, induce me to ſeek cooler climes for the recovery of my health, to which theſe torrid ones are ſo unfriendly: if I meet with an Arabian veſſel that can accommodate me tolerably well for the ſhort diſtance to Mocha, the India Company's agent will put me in the proper channel to get up the Red Sea, or I may poſſibly find an European ſhip to convey me to Suez; from thence acroſs the Iſthmus of that name to Alexandria, is not above a ſix day's journey, and I ſhall then be on the borders of the Mediterranean ſea, with daily opportunities of paſſing into Italy, or ſome part of Europe.

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The hopes of regaining ſo valuable a poſſeſſion as health, can alone make me form this wiſh, as I ſhall give up my Indian expedition with the greateſt reluctance; but as I retire from the ſun, I flatter myſelf, I ſhall receive daily benefit; and that by the time I arrive in England, I ſhall be fit for a campaign in the temperate zone. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Mocha, Dec. 30, 1781.

DEAR FRIEND.

YOU will perceive by the date of this, that I have put into execution the deſign, of which I gave ſome hints in my laſt, and am thus far in my way to Europe.

I embarked about three weeks ago in an Arabian veſſel that came into Morebat Bay for water, and was bound hither: my accommodations on board it, were not magnificent, but I had every thing that common wants required, and had an opportunity of learning of what diſadvantage it is on many occaſions to have too many of them, it is true,

> They prove a ſource of pleaſure when ſupply'd.
> GOLDSMITH.

but *vice versâ* of pain when unprovided for. I found myſelf rather uncomfortable at firſt on that account,

account, not being able to drink my tea, or make my meals quite so much at my ease as I was used to do; but seeing my copper-coloured fellow travellers happy with a little rice and water, and not distressed for want of tables, chairs and napkins, I adopted their customs more consonant to nature than my own, and soon reasoned myself into good humour, both with my situation and fare, and having a tolerable cabbin, was not in danger of suffering from the sun by day, or the dews by night. The Noquedah or master of the vessel, by name Hamet Ali, was a venerable old man, with a long white beard, and had a benignity of countenance that prepossessed me in his favour; his people likewise seemed to be good honest fellows, and I readily embarked on board his vessel, notwithstanding, some of my friends thought it rather an hazardous step, but I took care not to throw the temptation of booty in their way, taking with me, scarce any thing but my bedding and provisions, and giving them credit for so much liberality of sentiment as not to suspect any harm, because I was not of their colour, or did not, like them, believe Mahomet to be the true prophet. However, I endeavoured to cultivate their good will as much as possible; and on first going on board, sat down with the Noquedah and his officers to supper, the floor being both our table and chairs, on which we seated ourselves in a circle, with a large bowl of rice in

the middle, and ſome fiſh and dates before each perſon: here I likewiſe found that knives and forks were uſeleſs inſtruments in eating, and that nature had accommodated us with what anſwered the ſame purpoſe: we plunged our hands into the bowl, rolled up an handful of rice into a ball, and conveyed it to our mouths in that form: our repaſt was ſhort, and to that ſucceeded coffee and waſhing, and on their parts prayer, in which they were very frequent and fervent, always going through the motions of it together by ſignal from a man advanced before them, and every evening they chaunted forth Alla Alla, and the praiſes of Mahomet for an hour or two after ſun-ſet.

Our veſſel was one of the largeſt of this kind, and had thirty hands on board: all thoſe craft are built very ſharp at the head, and ſail extremely faſt, although they carry but one ſail; they are built of thin planks, ſown or rather laced together with cord; their ropes are made of Kiar the filament which covers the cocoa-nut ſhell, and their ſails of cotton: in our paſſage we ſteered from headland to headland, and were never far from land, which along the whole extent of the coaſt, appeared barren and rugged; as they take only three or four days water on board at a time, we were frequently obliged to put in at different places for a ſupply, which made our paſſage rather tedious, and what might have been done in eight days was, owing to that

that circumſtance, protracted to a fortnight, when we arrived here.

This city appears extremely beautiful as you approach it, being well built, and ſtanding cloſe to the water's edge; the houſes are very lofty, and are, as well as the walls, forts, &c. covered with a chinam or ſtucco, that gives a dazzling whiteneſs to them: the harbour is ſemicircular, and formed by two arms which run out into the ſea to equal lengths, having a fort at each extremity. The circuit of the wall is two miles: there are ſeveral handſome moſques in the city; but that with the tower built in honour of Shadeli, who founded the town, and brought the coffee plant into the neighbourhood, is the principal one. The Engliſh, French and Dutch have factories here; the houſe of the former is a very large and handſome building, in which I am comfortably lodged, and have already received benefit from the ſalubrity of the air, and other refreſhments which I meet with. The climate is now temperate and pleaſant, compared with what I have lately experienced, though the thermometer is generally up at 80. in the middle of the day, and at 77. in the mornings and evenings; there are no ſprings of freſh water in the town, but ſome of a very good quality within a quarter of a mile amongſt the groves of date trees: proviſions, fruits and vegetables are in great abundance.

Trade has much declined here of late years ſince Europe has been ſupplied with coffee from the Weſt-Indies, which article is the ſtaple commodity of this country; it grows at a place called Betelfaqui, ſixty miles from hence, and is brought here on camels: that patient and docile animal, in theſe eaſtern countries, ſhares with man in his toil, and tranſports his merchandiſe from place to place; he kneels down at the command of his maſter to receive his load, and carries it with a ſlow and ſteady pace acroſs dry and barren deſerts, ſupporting thirſt for ſeveral days together; nor is this animal uſeful only for the purpoſes of carrying a rider or his burden, but likewiſe ſupplies man both with food and raiment.

The fineſt breed of Arabian horſes is in this country, and has furniſhed us with thoſe we make uſe of for the turf; they are here chiefly articles of luxury, uſed only in war, or for parade: the governor has a large ſtud oppoſite to the houſe where I live, which affords me much pleaſure as I pay them frequent viſits; they are ſmall, but finely ſhaped, and extremely active; of this I had an opportunity of judging yeſterday when the cavalry had a field-day in the great ſquare, which, from the mode of exerciſe, called to my mind the idea of our antient tilts and tournaments: the liſts were ſurrounded by a great number of ſpectators, and within were drawn

drawn up fifty horſemen; they firſt moved in a body, and performed ſeveral charges with great rapidity, then diſperſed, ſome took antagoniſts, and practiſed with them a mock fight with lances of ten or twelve yards in length, which they all carried; others went ſingly through their exerciſe with that weapon, and the motions of attack and defence; their horſes were ſumptuouſly capariſoned, being adorned with gold and ſilver trappings, bells hung round their necks, and rich houſings; the riders were in handſome Turkiſh dreſſes, with white turbans, and the whole formed to me a new and pleaſing ſpectacle. There is a very martial ſpirit amongſt the Arabians in general; and the conſtant ſtate of warfare they are in with the Budoos, tends much to keep it up: theſe roving banditti, who are ſpread over the whole country, occaſionally form themſelves into numerous bodies for the purpoſe of plunder; and often by their depredations, bring down upon themſelves the Sovereign of the country at the head of his army, who frequently finds great difficulty in driving them away.

The kingdom of Sunnaa, in which ſtands this city, is ſituated in the fineſt part of Arabia, and that which, from its fertility, beſt deſerves the epithet we annex to it; the Arabians term this diſtrict Yemen: the Imaum or king of Sunnaa, reſides at the metropolis of that name in the interior

rior part of the country, ten days journey from hence, (a day's journey being twenty-five miles;) the two firſt days you paſs through the ſame flat and ſandy plain as that which ſurrounds this place; but beyond that, the country is fertile, and well cultivated, being diverſified with hill and dale: the town of Sunnaa ſtands amongſt mountains, and always enjoys a temperate climate. The circuit of the kingdom, they ſay, is ſix hundred miles: the Imaum has a large army in pay: he lives in great ſtate at his capital, has a numerous ſtud of very fine horſes, and his ſeraglio is compoſed of one hundred and fifty women: in this bleſſing of life, people may here indulge themſelves to what extent they pleaſe, there being no limitation to the number of concubines, though only four wives are allowed; the ſeraglios are therefore commonly in proportion to the wealth of the maſter, their concubines being ſlaves whom they purchaſe: their idea of beauty, as may eaſily be ſuppoſed, differs as much from our's as their colour; the more jetty black the complexion of the female, the more is ſhe admired; flat noſes and thick lips, are conſidered handſome; and therefore, the women of Abyſſina, which country is oppoſite to this coaſt, having thoſe perfections in the higheſt degree, fetch the greateſt price in the market; numbers of them are brought here, and ſent to the other parts of Arabia every year for ſale. Where a man has only a few women, they all

all live together in the ſame houſe, within which, they are kept cloſe priſoners, the jealouſy of the maſter hardly ever allowing them to ſtir abroad, but never on any account to be ſeen by or ſpeak to another man.

The Gentoos are very numerous in this city; theſe are a particular ſect of men that are ſcatter'd throughout the Eaſt, and are no leſs ſimple in their life and manners than ſingular in their doctrine: the founder of them was Brama who gave them their creed; they are diſtributed into what we term *caſtes* or communities of men who practiſe the ſame occupation and keep themſelves diſtinct from each other, they hold it the greateſt of crimes to drink out of the ſame veſſel with one of another *caſte* or religion, never eat of any animal, or kill even a fly, this lenity is founded on their belief in the *metempſychoſis* which alſo induces them to feed all kinds of animals, not knowing but that the ſouls of ſome of their friends may have taken up their abode in the bodies of them, ſo that the dogs, cats, cows, pigeons, fowls, &c. ſubſiſt moſtly by the charity of the Gentoos, the owners of them thinking it unneceſſary to be at the expence of feeding them when theſe good gentlemen are taught by their religion to take ſo much care of them.

Cheſcron

Chefcron Hadjee the Engliſh Agent is of that tribe, he has large *converſazionis* every afternoon, compoſed of his brother Banians, (the denomination given to ſuch as are of the mercantile *caſte*) who ſit round the room on cuſhions and take coffee with him, they are of a lighter colour than any other people here, and ſome of them might in looks paſs for ſallow Europeans, they dreſs in a long cloſe-bodied muſlin gown and a red turban made up into a form ſomething like a woman's bonnet; they cheriſh one ſingle lock on the crown of the head, ſhaving all the reſt, and generally have a red wafer ſtuck in the middle of their forehead, which is a religious badge placed there by the prieſts.

I was witneſs yeſterday to a curious ceremony, called in the Eaſt *champooing*; coming accidentally into the apartment where my friend Cheſcron, who is a little deformed dropſical old man, generally lays reclined on cuſhions, I beheld him ſtretched out quite naked on the floor, and proſtrate on his face, while his attendants were rubbing him; I was at firſt apprehenſive, that the old fellow had fallen down in a fit, and thought they were trying to bring him to life again; they laid hold of his fleſh in different parts, pinching and clawing him with great violence; I approached him with ſome fear; when hearing me ſpeak, he turned up his brown face with a

ſmile

ſmile, by which I found that all was right with him, and to my ſurprize heard, that this operation was looked on as ſalutary, and extremely pleaſant; it muſt without doubt promote a circulation of the blood, and ſuppleneſs of the joints, every one of which they pull and pinch, but I hardly think we ſhall ever borrow this luxury from the Eaſt.

There are many rich merchants here, but as their wealth increaſes, the ſovereign makes a demand for his ſhare, which is as much as he chuſes to aſk for: when his wants are preſſing, he ſends orders to the governor to demand a free gift of ſo many dollars from the merchants, which they freely give, becauſe they dare not refuſe: the governor aſſeſſes them according to his own pleaſure, dividing the ſum to be raiſed between Banians and Muſſulmen.

In travelling through different countries, the firſt idea that ſuggeſts itſelf is, whether the laws and cuſtoms which prevail, are ſuch as tend to make the people happy; and in forming this eſtimation, we are but too apt to meaſure their feelings by our own, which is in fact to conſider whether we ſhould ourſelves be happy in them, arguing on this principle, we muſt of courſe draw our compariſon much to the diſadvantage of that country, where the violation of property is ſo cuſtomary as it is here; and the intercourſe with the *beau ſexe* is founded on tyranny and compulſion,

inſtead of that delicacy and ſympathy of ſentiment which forms thoſe attachments with us. But to weigh the matter fairly, we ſhould pronounce, that if an Engliſhman would be miſerable in Arabia Felix, an Arabian would be no leſs ſo in England; the force of cuſtom, climate and complexion, which makes men equally happy in different quarters of the globe, will not allow them to be tranſplanted more than the fruits of the country, which can only flouriſh in their proper ſoils. I believe the *fonds* of happineſs are pretty nearly the ſame throughout the world, and that nature has in all places adapted the country and the natives of it to each other. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Juddah, March 6, 1782.

DEAR FRIEND.

I Know not whether the ſatisfaction I had, on arriving at this place or that which I ſhall receive on quitting it, will be the greateſt: the former proceeded from its being the period of a tedious paſſage from Mocha, the latter will ariſe from the pleaſure one muſt naturally feel at leaving a place that has not the means of affording any.

I embarked at Mocha in a trankey of the ſame kind as that which conveyed me from Morebat; and ſailing in the evening with a freſh breeze and rough ſea, which I thought would ſwallow up my little veſſel, reached Hodeida the next afternoon: that place is in the kingdom of Sunnaa; and being nearer to Betelfaqui than Mocha, ſhips off much more coffee for Juddah: the maſter of the veſſel detained me here two days greatly againſt my own will

and his profeſſions before we ſet off; he took at this place a pilot, as all the coaſting veſſels do; and being again embarked, we ſailed at midnight, and had a much higher ſea than we experienced between Mocha and Hodeida; the ſwell was ſo great, that I doubted much whether our cockle ſhell would be able to live in it; we were toſſed about in a very alarming manner for twelve hours, and then arrived and anchored off the ſmall iſland of Camaran, famous only for its good water.

We ſailed early the next morning; the breeze was at firſt fair, but did not long continue ſo, and almoſt ever after, during our paſſage, was contrary, and by that means it was protracted to eight and twenty days, though frequently performed in eight or ten. Our courſe lay along ſhore betwixt the main land and a chain of little iſlands, with which, as likewiſe with rocks and ſhoals the ſea abounds in this part; and for that reaſon it is the practice with all theſe veſſels to anchor every evening: we generally brought up cloſe to the ſhore, and the land breeze ſpringing up about midnight, wafted to us the perfumes of Arabia, with which it was ſtrongly impregnated and very fragrant; the latter part of it, carried us off in the morning, and continued till eight, when it generally fell calm for two or three hours, and after that the northerly wind ſet in, often

often obliging us to anchor under the lee of the land by noon: it happened that one morning when we had been driven by ſtreſs of weather into a ſmall bay called Birk Bay, the country around it being inhabited by the Budoos, the Noquedah ſent his people on ſhore to get water, for which it is always cuſtomary to pay: The Budoos were as the people thought, rather too exorbitant in their demands, and not chuſing to comply with them, returned to make their report to their maſter; on hearing it, rage immediately ſeized him, and determined to have the water on his own terms, or periſh in the attempt, he buckled on his armour, and attended by his myrmidons, carrying their match-lock guns and lances, being twenty in number, they rowed to the land: my Arabian ſervant, who went on ſhore with the firſt party, and ſaw that the Budoos were diſpoſed for fighting, told me that I ſhould certainly ſee a battle; I accordingly looked on very anxiouſly, hoping that the fortune of the day would be on the ſide of my friends, but heaven ordained it otherwiſe; for after a parley of about a quarter of an hour, with which the Budoos amuſed them till near an hundred were aſſembled, they proceeded to the attack and routed the ſailors, who made a precipitate retreat, the Noquedah and two having fallen in the action, and ſeveral being wounded; they contrived however to bring off their dead; and the group around the body of the Noquedah

was

was truly moving; the grief expreſſed by all, teſtified the regard they bore him, but in none was ſo ſtrongly marked as in the furrowed face of an old ſlave, who looked on with ſilent anguiſh while a tear trickled down his cheek. The weather obliged us to paſs that and the following day in the diſagreeable neighbourhood of our enemies; and my Arabian ſervant Mahommed, in whoſe compoſition fear was a principal ingredient, took great pains to repreſent to me how practicable a thing it would be for the Budoos to cut us off in the night, ſince they would not have above a ſtone's throw to ſwim; and being ſo numerous, might eaſily board the trankey when every body was aſleep; I aſſented very readily to what he ſaid, and ſtrongly recommending to him to keep a good look-out, doubted not but that his vigilance would render my repoſe ſecure.

Throughout this affair I could not but admire the ſpirit of my fellow travellers, altho' overpowered by numbers, they had unfortunately loſt the day; and the generous ſorrow expreſſed by them on the death of their leader, gave me a good opinion of their humanity and feelings: but an act of ſavage cruelty they committed three days after, entirely removed it.

One of the ſailors died of his wounds, and at two o'clock they anchored near the land, and went on ſhore to bury him; three Budoos of a different

different tribe from thoſe they had fought with, came down to the beach out of curioſity, and ſtood by as ſpectators of the ceremony, which being ended, the ſailors, who were twelve in number, turned to theſe poor innocent fellows, told them that the man whom they had buried, was killed by ſome Budoos, and in revenge ſacrificed theſe people to his *manes*, ſtabbing and mangling them in an horrid manner; they returned to the veſſel exulting, and thinking they had performed a gallant action, ſeemed as they told their tale to demand from every one a ſmile of approbation, but not being able to give them one, I aſked Mahommed, who joined in the general joy, how ſuch an action could pleaſe him; he replied, that they had done very right, for their book ordered them always to kill an equal number of the ſame kind of people as had killed any of theirs: as a puniſhment to him for theſe *tenets*, I was not ſorry that he had again a night of fear and watching; for towards duſk we diſcovered a large body of Budoos on the ſhore; this put him on thorns, and the idea of being cut off, did not (I believe) ſuffer him to get a wink of ſleep all night. We left this bloody coaſt on the morning following, and ſtopping at a place called Confidah to get water, meeting with ſtrong gales from north, which obliged us to remain at anchor for days together, but without any more adventures or blood-ſhed, we arrived here.

The

Tired with being cooped up ſo long in a ſmall veſſel, and anxious to purſue my route, I landed at this place with the hopes of leaving it in a day or two, and have been detained near ſix weeks, waiting for the ſailing of the annual Suez fleet, recommended to me as the moſt eligible, or indeed the only ſafe mode of going thither.

When I ſay of Juddah, that it is *terra ſenza frutti & popolo ſenza Fede*, I believe I give you a pretty juſt deſcription of it; but to enter into a more minute one, I muſt inform you that it is an old and ill-built town, ſurrounded by a broken and ruinous wall, having no fort, nor any guns mounted; it is ſituated nearly mid-way betwixt Mocha and Suez, on the eaſtern coaſt of the Red Sea, and is a place of the greateſt trade on it: the commerce between Arabia and Europe here meets, and is interchanged; the former ſending her gums, drugs, coffee, &c. which are brought in ſmall veſſels from the whole extent of the coaſt, as far as Buſſora in the Perſian Gulf, and from Europe come cloths, iron, furs and other articles, by way of Cairo: the revenue ariſing from the duties on theſe is ſhared by the Grand Signor and Xerif of Mecca, to whom this place jointly belongs: it was formerly tributary to the Grand Signor only; but the latter, whoſe dominions ſurround it, ſeized on it; the affair however being compromiſed between them, they now ſhare the profits of the port:

port; the former ſends annually a Pacha to ſupport his pretenſions, and collect the revenue; the latter deputes a governor who is termed the Vizir Xerif, and has the chief power and authority here: the man who at preſent in that capacity diſpenſes law and juſtice, is an Abyſſinian eunuch, and was a ſlave in the late Xerif's family.

The people here are not quite ſo black as at Mocha, having a yellowiſh tinge in their complexions: their way of living is much the ſame as there; they ſit croſs-legged on the ground at their meals, waſh, pray, drink coffee, and ſmoke hookah five times in the day. There are ſeveral coffee-houſes which are always full; the common people there drink their diſh of coffee together as our's would their pot of beer at an alehouſe. The women ſeem to have rather more liberty than at Mocha, as I ſee many of them walking about the ſtreets; but the appearance they make is ſo extraordinary, that at firſt I was doubtful in what *genus* to claſs them; they wear looſe cloth trowſers and yellow Huſſar boots, have veils of white linen over their faces, reaching almoſt to the ground, with only two ſmall ſlits for the eyes, and wrap themſelves in a large looſe plaid of coarſe cloth; they have a variety of gold and ſilver trinkets round their arms and legs, and wear necklaces of ſmall pieces of money ſtrung; all theſe make a jingle like bells as they walk;

through one of their noſtrils they wear a ring with a flat plate on it like a coat button and dye their hands red with an herb that grows in the country; they are as fond of ſmoaking hookah as the men; and when they viſit, always take it along with them.

Being near the fountain-head of their faith, the people here are great bigots to their religion, and of courſe inveterate enemies to the chriſtians; any ſtranger of that claſs is ſure of being inſulted in the ſtreets, unleſs he has a guard with him; they are not allowed to go out of the gate leading to Mecca; and in their dreſs, muſt be careful to avoid green or white, two colours ſacred to Muſſulmen; and even of theſe, ſuch only as are deſcended from Mahomet, may wear the green turban; nor are we thought by them to be worthy the honor of mounting an horſe; for they ſay as our prophet contented himſelf with riding an aſs, his followers have no right to be better mounted; but as the jack-aſs is an animal whoſe paces I don't much admire, I take my exerciſe on foot, and can only walk for a ſhort way by the ſea ſide; though as the country around is all a deſert, I do not regret that I cannot penetrate into it; the only circumſtance from which I have received any ſatisfaction during my ſtay here is, the temperature of the air, which with ſea bathing, has agreed very well with my northern conſtitution:

tion: the thermometer having generally been below 70.

About a quarter of a mile north of the town is a white building called Eve's ſepulchre; and they tell you that ſhe was certainly buried there, and that her grave is twenty feet in length, which they determine to have been the ſtandard height of mankind at that early period of the world; the two Arabick words *oumana houa*, ſignifying Eve the mother of all are inſcribed on the building; they go every Sabbath to pray there, but will not ſuffer a chriſtian to viſit it. The two moſt valuable productions of this country are balm of Gilead and Senna, the former is extracted from a tree which grows amongſt the mountains, the latter is a ſhrub found near Mecca.

Our merchants in India uſed to ſend annually ſhips from Bengal and other parts to Juddah, but the arbitrary impoſitions laid on the goods and the frauds they experienced from the people, has made them entirely diſcontinue this commerce: a moſt glaring inſtance of villany in the Prince of the country, and his Lord Lieutenant of Juddah ſtands foremoſt on the latter liſt; they jointly bought the cargo of an Engliſh ſhip worth near £.50,000, took the goods, and engaged to pay the money in a few days; but

the Supercargo after repeated applications, was obliged to return to India, having only the Xerif's bill, payable the following ſummer; accordingly he returned, was very preſſing for the money, but met with no better ſucceſs than before, and only received a freſh bill, with poſitive aſſurances that he ſhould be paid the following year; it happened that before his return, both the Xerif and his Vizir were dead, and when he applied for payment of the bill to the reigning Xerif, who was ſon to the former, he flatly refuſed to pay a farthing, ſaying, that as the debt was incurred by his father, his father only was anſwerable for it, that it was true he was dead, but the body was at his ſervice, and if it would be any ſatisfaction to the creditors, he was very welcome to carry it to Bengal with him.

A place, where the natural advantages are ſo few and the moral defects ſo great, cannot you may ſuppoſe, be a pleaſing one to ſpend much time at; I promiſe you I am impatient to quit it, and turn my face northward. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

Suez, April 25, 1782.

DEAR FRIEND.

SHOULD I tell you that I arrived here yeſterday after a paſſage of ſix weeks from Juddah, without entering into a detail of the manner in which I performed that voyage, I ſhould do injuſtice to the Turkiſh mode of navigation on the Red Sea, and pay but a bad compliment to the Suez fleet whoſe performances ought not to be paſſed over in ſilence.

The conſtruction and management of the veſſels are equally ſingular and I fear any deſcription will fall infinitely ſhort of the originals; they were I believe, deſigned by thoſe who built them to bear ſome reſemblance to ſhips, but having very few of the properties of thoſe machines proceed on a principle totally different from

from any I before beheld; that *primum mobile* to which ſhips of other countries are indebted for their voyages is here of little uſe and calms are more favorable than wind to forward their progreſs, for unleſs the latter comes in a very ſmall quantity they rarely chuſe to expoſe their ſails to it and herein ſeem equally averſe to a fair as to a contrary wind, remaining at anchor till it ſubſides into a calm, their buſy ſcene then commences, the anchor is weighed and the veſſel put in motion by means of the boat with about twenty oars in it, towing till a breeze ſprings up, when this begins to be more than what our ſeamen call a light air they hurry to the ſhore and let go their anchor, and for this purpoſe always chuſe a birth the moſt environed by rocks and ſhoals, never thinking themſelves ſecure but when in the midſt of danger; their common time of anchoring, was about two o'clock in the afternoon for about that time the breeze generally freſhened, and in proportion as that encreaſes they put out anchors till they have ſix in the water and two or three hawſers beſides to tie them to the ſurrounding rocks: in this ſituation did we frequently remain for days together; but in what they called good weather we had not above two anchors out and if it fell calm after ſun ſet they ventured to get one of them up that they might be ready for the land breeze in the morning, which generally

ſprung

ſprung up at two o'clock and blew till nine or ten, and as it hardly made a curl on the water ſuited our mariners exactly, they always got under way with it as ſoon as it was light and ſometimes before; I believe without theſe land-breezes, we ſhould never have arrived at Suez, a circumſtance that very frequently happens to many veſſels of this annual fleet, for if they do not make good their paſſage before the latter end of May, the northerly winds blow ſo conſtantly as to render it impoſſible, for veſſels that cannot work to windward, to get up the narrow channel from Tor to Suez.

As we remained then every afternoon at anchor near the ſhore, nor ever ventured far from it when under way; you may ſuppoſe that, in the courſe of my voyage, I had ſufficient opportunity to make my obſervations both on the Red Sea famous in the ſacred hiſtory, and likewiſe on the coaſt of Arabia which was perpetually before my eyes; the latter being Arabia Deſerta, is literally what its name implies; the former preſented no appearance that juſtifies the term given to it proceeding as ſome authors ſay from a reddiſh tinge on the waters, but no ſuch did I ever take notice of: our climate was always clear and ſerene and became much more temperate as we moved northward, indeed the wind chiefly

chiefly blowing from that quarter made the air cool: during the latter part of our paſſage, it has blown very freſh at times, and obliged us once to remain at anchor eight days together in the ſame place: our fleet has ſuffered very much thereby; and we are laying here at preſent in company with four other veſſels, and are the only ones that have as yet got up: intelligence over land informs us of the loſs of four, driven from their anchors in the blowing weather, and wrecked; and that two others anchored near the ſhore, were in the night boarded and plundered by the Budoos; one was wrecked a day or two after we left Juddah, ſo that five of them being loſt, and two plundered, near one third of the fleet is diſpoſed of that way; five are at Suez, and the reſt have not been heard of: you may be ſure that I think myſelf fortunate in having arrived here amongſt the firſt, and eſcaped all the perils of this curious voyage of about two hundred leagues; nor am I ſo much ſurpriſed that we have been near fifty days in performing it, as that, conſidering their mode of manœuvring, we ſhould be able to perform it at all. But to give you a more exact idea thereof, I will tranſcribe for your peruſal the journal I kept on board the Mahaboube, bound from Juddah to the port of Suez. The daily height of the thermometer I have not ſet down for any particular hour, but have taken it always

always at the higheſt point it was at in the courſe of the day.

March 10. Embarked this afternoon on board the Mahaboube, a veſſel of about five hundred tons burthen, laden with coffee and pilgrims returning from the Hadge, (the annual feſtival of the Muſſulmen held at Mecca;) theſe lay intermingled on the deck; each perſon has a ſmall ſpace allotted to him where he ſleeps, cooks his victuals, &c. The great cabbin and round-houſe are divided into ſmall births for paſſengers. This veſſel is built very high at the poop, and ſquare at the bows; it is ſteered by a ſingular contrivance acroſs the deck; between the mizen and the main maſt is placed a large beam, which projects near twenty feet from the ſhip's ſides; to each end of this beam is fixed a ſmall one twelve feet long, the centre thereof being tied to the end of the great beam, but ſo as to allow it to move backwards and forwards: from one end of this ſmall beam paſſes a rope to the rudder, and from the other end a rope to the helmſman, who ſits at the aftermoſt part of the poop and ſteers.

11. Dropped down to the mouth of the channel, which is very narrow and difficult; anchored there at noon. In making ſail, they hoiſt up the yards with the ſails looſe; the lower yards being laid acroſs the decks while at anchor, the upper

ones reſting on the tops. The pilot is ſtationed on the bowſprit from whence he gives directions to the helmſman. The ſails are of ſtriped and figured cotton. The ſhips are painted dark brown, with figures and ornaments in white and red.

12. The fleet compoſed of twenty-five ſail of different forms and ſizes, weighed at ſix A. M. and proceeded in company: they mean to keep together till they have paſſed Yambo, which has lately been taken from the Xerif of Mecca by the Budoos, who have large boats, and it is thought, mean to attack the fleet, or at leaſt any ſtraggling ſhips they meet with. Light air from ſouth. Anchored at four P. M. Thermometer 82. Diſtance gone about twenty miles.

13. Weighed at five A. M. Light air from weſt ſouth weſt. Anchored at four P. M. Diſtance twenty miles. Thermometer 83.

14. Weighed at four A. M. with the land breeze. Calm at ten A. M. Towed till 12. Sea-breeze then ſet in, and we anchored at two P. M. Diſtance ſixteen miles. Thermometer 85.

15. Weighed at four A. M. with the land breeze. Calm at nine. Towed moſt part of the day, and anchored at four P. M. Diſtance ſixteen miles. Thermometer 88.

16. At

16. At anchor, wind north-weſt. Thermometer 80.

17. Sailed at ſeven A. M. with a land breeze. Calm at eleven. Light air from north weſt at noon. Anchored at four P. M. Diſtance fifteen miles.

18. Sailed at ſix A. M. with a light air. Calm at nine. Towed till noon, when breeze from north weſt ſprung up, and we anchored at two P. M. Diſtance 15 miles. Thermometer 80.

19. Sailed at four A. M. with the land breeze. Calm at eleven. Towed till noon, when a light air from north weſt ſprung up. Anchored at five P. M. Diſtance twenty miles. Thermometer 82.

20. Sailed at ſix. A. M. Anchored at two P. M. Wind weſt. Diſtance twenty miles. Thermometer 83.

21. Sailed at four A. M. anchored at two P. M. off Yambo, in company with the fleet, diſtant about a mile from the town: it is a good looking place, has ſeveral moſques and a caſtle.

22. At anchor. Wind blowing freſh from north weſt. Thermometer 79. Our boats paſs unmo-

leſted backwards and forwards, between the ſhips and the town for water and proviſions.

23. At anchor. Wind north weſt. Thermometer 79.

24. At anchor. Wind north weſt. Thermometer 80.

25. Sailed at ſun-riſe. Anchored at three P. M. Wind weſt ſouth weſt. Thermometer 85½.

26. Sailed early with the land-breeze. Calm at nine A. M. Towed till noon. Sea breeze ſet in, anchored at three P. M. Thermometer 86.

27. Sailed at five A. M. Anchored at three P. M. off Gebel Haſſani, a ſmall iſland, being abreaſt of Haura on the main land. Thermometer 84½.

28. Sailed with the land breeze at five A. M. Calm at ten. North wind ſet in at noon. Anchored at four P. M. Thermometer 84. A thunder ſtorm at night.

29. Sailed at ſix A. M. Anchored at four P. M. Thermometer 79.

30. Sailed

30. Sailed at ſix A. M. Anchored at five P. M. Light air weſt. Thermometer 83.

31. Sailed at ſeven A. M. Paſſed through a narrow channel of about a mile in length, and not more than twice the breadth of the ſhip, with rocks and ſands on each ſide: after the ſhips had paſſed through it, they fired guns for joy, it being conſidered the moſt dangerous part of the voyage.

April 1. Sailed at ſeven A. M. Anchored at noon. Wind north weſt. Thermometer 76.

2. Sailed at ſix A. M. Anchored at four P. M. having paſſed Shek Bermak, a ſmall iſland at the extremity of a chain of ſands and iſlands that extend from Gebel Haſſani thither. Thermometer 77.

3. Sailed at four A. M. and it being calm in the evening, we ſtood on towing moſt part of the night. Thermometer 85.

4. Calm till ten A. M. Wind ſet in from north, anchored at eleven A. M. Thermometer 81.

5. Sailed at three A. M. Anchored at three P. M. Light air from weſt. Thermometer 83.

6. Sailed

6. Sailed with the land breeze at one A. M. Anchored at three P. M. Thermometer 80.

7. Sailed at ſix A. M. Anchored at five P. M. near Iſlam. Several Arabs and camels came down to the beach, and ſome people went from hence by land to Cairo, a journey of fourteen days.

8. Sailed with the land breeze at one A. M. Paſſed Moilah at five P. M. and the wind being fair and moderate, continued our courſe during the night, ſtanding over for Raz Mahommed: the wind ſhifted at midnight to north, and drove us up into the Eaſtern Fork of the ſea almoſt as far as Acaba. Thermometer 85.

9. Wind contrary, made little way and anchored at three P. M. Thermometer 80.

10. Sailed at ſeven A. M. Light air at north weſt. Anchored at ſix P. M. Thermometer 84.

11. Sailed at ſix A. M. Paſſed the iſlands Tyran and Senaffre. Anchored at two P. M. in a ſmall bay called Sharm. Two or three hundred Arabs came down to the beach on camels. The captain of our ſhip ſent his boat for the Scheik, and gave him preſents of coffee, &c. Our people ſeemed to have ſome apprehenſions from theſe Arabs,

Arabs, loading their arms, and keeping watch all night. Thermometer 85.

12. Sailed at two A. M. with a fair wind, paſſed Raz Mahommed at five A. M. which event they celebrated by firing guns. Paſſed the iſle of Sheduan at ſeven A. M. and Tor, at one P. M. ſoon after came in ſight of Mount Sinai and Horeb; the former is here called Tauroſina: on it is a convent of Greek catholicks, to which many chriſtians make pilgrimages; to enter it, you muſt be hoiſted in a baſket up a very high precipice on which it ſtands. Thermometer 84. we ſtood on during the night.

13. At one A. M. a breeze from north ſet in, at day light we made for the ſhore, and anchored cloſe to it. Thermometer 83.

14. At anchor. Wind blowing freſh from north. Thermometer at ſun-riſe 66.

15. At anchor, it blowing freſh. Thermometer at ſun-riſe 62½. Two veſſels which were anchored near us, drove aſhore in the night, and went to pieces; the people were with difficulty ſaved, ſome of which we took on board.

16. At anchor, it blowing freſh. Thermometer at ſun-riſe 67.

17. At

17. At anchor. Wind north. Thermometer 75, at two P. M.

18. At anchor. Wind north. Thermometer at ſun-riſe 65, at two P. M. 80. Arabs and camels are daily paſſing along the ſhore. Some people from a ſhip (anchored near us) ſet off to-day by land to Suez, a journey of five days on camels.

19. At anchor. Wind north. Thermometer at ſun-riſe 66; at two P. M. 74.

20. At anchor. Wind north. Thermometer at ſun-riſe 66; at two P. M. 74.

21. Sailed at ſix A. M. with a fair wind, and at two P. M. paſſed Burkit Pharoon, ſignifying Pharaoh's whirlpool. This they determine to be that part of the Red Sea which Moſes and the children of Iſrael croſſed, as related in the bible, when purſued by Pharaoh, who they ſay was drowned in that very ſpot where this eddy is. Our people here killed a ſheep, cut off it's head, which they ſmoked with incenſe, and threw it into the ſea, praying at the ſame time. The high land on the Arabian ſhore is called the Hummum, from a ſpring of boiling water on it. This place is half way between Tor and Suez. The wind continuing fair and moderate, we ſtood on till eleven

eleven P. M. when it ſhifted to weſt, and we anchored.

22. At anchor. Wind north. Thermometer at ſun-riſe 64. at two P. M. 76.

23. Sailed at ſeven A. M. Anchored at eight P. M. Thermometer at two P. M. 75. Suez in ſight from the maſt-head at ſun-ſet.

24. Sailed at ſun-riſe. Anchored off Suez at four P. M. Thermometer 70.

Suez, which was the Arſinoe of the antients, is ſituated at the top of the Red Sea; it ſtands ſurrounded by the Deſert, and is a ſhabby ill-built place: the ſhips anchor a league from the town, to which the channel that leads is very narrow, and has only nine or ten feet depth of water; for which reaſon, the large ſhips that are built here, muſt be towed down to the road without maſts, guns, or any thing in them; there are eight of them laying here which have not been to Juddah this year; one of them is at leaſt twelve hundred tons burthen, being as lofty as an hundred-gun-ſhip, though not longer than a frigate; ſo that you may judge of the good proportions they obſerve in the conſtruction of their ſhips: the timber of which they are all built, is brought from Syria by water to Cairo, and from thence on ca-

mels. This fleet ſails for Juddah every year before the Hadge, ſtays there two or three months, and returns loaded with coffee: this is ſo material an article in the diet of a Muſſulman, that the prayers and wiſhes of them all are offered up for its ſafety; and I believe next to the loſs of their country, the loſs of their coffee would be moſt ſeverely felt by them: the greateſt part of it is ſent to Conſtantinople, and other parts of Turkey, but a ſmall quantity going to France and Italy.

Suez is ſo wretched a place, that though, as you may ſuppoſe, I am heartily tired of my Turkiſh ſhip, yet ſooner than ſtay on ſhore, I prefer waiting on board it till the Caravan ſets out for Cairo, which will be in two or three days. I ſhall not be a little pleaſed when this paſſage of the Deſert is over, to which I look forward with a kind of dread from the heat and fatigue likely to attend it, the ſeaſon being advanced far beyond my expectations when I firſt turned my face towards Europe; but my health is much mended of late, and I flatter myſelf will be equal to the fatigue of the journey; beſides when I conſider that it will be only of three days continuance, and all the remainder of my way will be ſmooth and eaſy, I ſhall bear the inconvenience more patiently. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Cairo, May 1, 1782.

DEAR FRIEND.

I ARRIVED at this place early yesterday morning after a moſt diſagreeable journey acroſs the Deſert, but fortunately a ſhorter one than uſual, having performed it in a day and an half.

When I tell you that I came with a Caravan from Suez, I ſhould likewiſe tell you, that a Caravan in theſe countries, ſignifies an aſſemblage of camels, horſes, mules, men and other animals, who are formed into large bodies for the ſake of mutual protection; and as they travel in ſome parts for two or three months together over waſte and barren deſerts, which yield nothing for the ſupport either of man or beaſt, are obliged to take all neceſſaries with them, and particularly water: it is on theſe occaſions that they find the ſuperior excellence of

the camel to all other animals; not only from its great ſtrength and unwearied perſeverance, but from that property it has of ſuſtaining thirſt for ſeveral days. Thoſe annual caravans which go from Aleppo and Cairo to Mecca, are often compoſed of thirty or forty thouſand people, and are under military government, an officer being appointed by the Grand Signor, called the Emir Hadge, who conducts and commands them; the order of march is regular, and by ranks; the diſcipline is very exact, and a guard of Janiſſaries with field-pieces form the eſcort: they have regular times of marching and halting, which is done by ſignal. When they take up their ground for the night, tents are pitched, kitchens, cook-ſhops and coffee-houſes are immediately erected, and a large camp is formed; every thing is as quickly packed, and the camels are loaded in the morning to be ready for gun-firing, which puts the whole body in motion. The caravan from Cairo performs its journey to Mecca in forty days, where having ſtaid about a month to celebrate the Hadge, a feſtival in which both the intereſts of trade and religion are equally conſulted; it returns in the ſame order, ſtopping at Medina in the way back, to pay a viſit to and make offerings at the ſhrine of Mahommed, that having been the place of his interment, as Mecca was of his nativity.

The

The zeal ſhewn by Muſſulmen, and the toils and ſufferings undergone by them for the ſake of paying this compliment to their prophet, are wonderful; they flock to Mecca from all parts of the Mahometan countries, and perform the moſt laborious journies: the poorer part of theſe pilgrims, depend on charity for their ſupport, which rarely yields them any thing better than a ſcanty allowance of bread and water. Vanity, religion, ſuperſtition and commerce, are the four principal cauſes of theſe annual pilgrimages. A Muſſulman that has been at Mecca, gains thereby a degree of credit and honor amongſt his countrymen, with the term of Hadge added to his name whenever he is ſpoke to; his attendance there once at leaſt in his life is required by his creed: many viſit it in compliance with vows made at ſome time of impending danger, or conditionally on the attainment of a deſirable object; others who have lead diſſolute lives go there for abſolution, and with an intention to reform; and others for the purpoſes of traffick: all fancy themſelves the better for having been there; and from that conviction, perhaps many really become ſo.

But to return from Mahommed to my Suez caravan. This being under no regulations, was an irregular and ſtraggling body, conſiſting of about one thouſand camels, and half as many men, and ſet out about noon 28th of April, travelling on till eight

eight at night: we then took up our ground; the camels eaſed of their burthens, placed themſelves in circles round their food *couchant* with their legs under them, and the men in the ſame order formed their meſſes: the caravan was in motion by three the next morning, and travelled on without making one ſingle halt, even to give the camels water or food, till nine at night: you may from hence be able to form ſome conjecture of the power of that animal; the pace we went at, ſeemed to be nearly four miles an hour, and this was continued for eighteen hours together. My travelling carriage was termed a Kuſhob; to compare ſmall things with great, I may ſay that it reſembles the body of a coach, with an opening between the two ſeats for the back of the camel on which it is placed longitudinally, ſo that one ſeat hangs on one ſide, the other on the other, and on each ſits a perſon: I had a canopy over the top, in which I found ſingular uſe, as the heat of the ſun was intolerable; and though I could not be conveyed in a manner more favorable to my feelings, laying along on mattraſſes and pillows placed over the ſeat; yet the uneaſy motion of the camel, the heat of the weather, and the exceſſive drought I experienced, rendered it the moſt unpleaſant journey I ever made; I took out my thermometer about two o'clock, and found it 92. but it ſoon roſe to 96. and fearful that if I kept it longer expoſed to this air of fire,

it

it would riſe ſtill higher, a ſight to which my ſpirits were not equal, I put it by. Half dead with heat and fatigue, I was conſidering whether it would be poſſible for me to ſupport another day, which I expected we were to paſs in the ſame way before we arrived at Cairo, when a Turk who came up from Juddah in the ſame ſhip with me, rode up to my carriage, aſking me *Chooft Bahar-Nile?* Do you ſee the Nile? pointing at the ſame time to a ſpot not very far diſtant, telling me immediately after, that we ſhould get to the walls of Mezr (the Turkiſh name for Cairo,) that night, and go in next morning at ſun-riſe. I hardly knew how to credit ſo joyful a piece of news; but he continuing to aſſert it ſeriouſly, I at length believed him, and to me it was like a ſentence of reprieve to a condemned man; we accordingly travelled on till near nine, and then came to a ſmall village, where we put up for the night, and to my no ſmall joy arrived here early the next morning. The diſtance from Suez hither is eighty miles, and is always a three days journey for loaded camels, but our's all belonging to Cairo, and being light, as the coffee they came for was not ready, they made their journey in this ſhort time that I have mentioned.

Having explained to you the mode of our travelling, it will not require many words to deſcribe a country uniformly barren and ſandy; ſome part

of

of the way lay through a narrow valley, which appeared to be the bed of the canal that was made to join the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, and came into the latter at Suez; a great number of petrified branches of trees, and pieces of wood are met with on the road, with here and there a carcafe on which the vultures prey, and in fome parts a few ſtunted ſhrubs: every one in theſe journies goes armed, as the caravans are frequently attacked and plundered by the wild Arabs, who ſtrip the people, and leave them to periſh on the Deſert, a circumſtance that I am ſorry to ſay, happened to ſeveral of our countrymen about three years ago in the following melancholy manner.

A contraband trade had for ſome years been carried on by Engliſh people from India to Cairo, much to their advantage, and as much to the prejudice of our commerce from thence to Europe: ſeveral ſhips came annually to Suez with cargoes from India; and though there was a Firman of the Grand Signor's, to whom that port belongs, ſtrictly forbidding all foreign ſhips or chriſtians to approach Suez; yet as the Pacha of Cairo and Chief Bey, found their intereſt in this illicit trade, they ſuffered the Firman to ſleep, which it did, till a new Pacha was ſent from Conſtantinople with ſtrict orders to enforce it, whereon the following tragical adventure befell the Engliſh-

Engliſhmen when they came next to Suez with their accuſtomed merchandiſe: not aware of this change of men and meaſures at Cairo they landed the cargoes of their ſhips at Suez, paid the duties, loaded the camels, and ſet off: they travelled on the firſt day with ſecurity, pleaſing themſelves probably with the viſionary wealth which theſe goods were to produce to them, and little thinking how ſad a reverſe the next morning's light would occaſion: ſcarce had they moved off the ground where they paſſed the night, when they were ſurrounded by a large body of men, plundered, wounded, ſtripped, and left naked on the Deſert, the camels with all their effects, water and proviſions being taken off by the robbers: in this piteous plight they conſulted what was to be done, the only alternative being whether they ſhould return to Suez, or proceed to Cairo: they imprudently reſolved on the latter, whither the diſtance was double of that to Suez, to which place two only of the company, wiſer than the reſt, made good their retreat; the others went towards Cairo, at the inſtance of a Commander of one of the ſhips, who told them that he knew the way acroſs the Deſert, and that by going ſtraight to Cairo, and laying their caſe before the government, they would ſtand a better chance of recovering their goods; he gave the firſt proof how bad his counſel was, for being ſoon ſpent with heat and fatigue, he dropped

and died. Being without their pilot, the reſt had but little chance of finding their way acroſs the Deſert, where there is hardly a track; indeed had they known it perfectly, it would have availed them little, naked and expoſed to the ſcorching beams of an African ſun in the month of Auguſt, without a drop of water to allay the raging thirſt they muſt have experienced: all periſhed except one, who arrived ſpent and ſpeechleſs at ſome Arab huts about a league from Cairo; the people there took a great deal of care of him, recovered him a little, and brought him hither; he could ſcarcely articulate the name of the perſon to whoſe houſe he wiſhed to go, who hardly knew him, ſo disfigured as he was with his ſufferings, which he did not get the better of in a twelvemonth.

You will join with me, no doubt, in condemning the cruelty and weakneſs of a government that executes its laws under the maſk of robbery, and inflicts puniſhment in the miſerable manner I have above related; and ſuch was the mode adopted by the Pacha and Bey to put in force the Firman of the Grand Signor; they themſelves in fact plundered the Caravan, by means of their ſoldiers whom they ſent on this errand, and appropriated the ſpoil to their own uſe: they contrived likewiſe to get poſſeſſion of the Engliſh ſhips by an artifice of the ſame dark nature, and impriſoned the crews. The government of Cairo, which

which by openly seizing the effects of the people who came there contrary to the order of the Grand Signor, and contrary to the laws of their own country, would have acted properly, may justly stand taxed with the greatest inhumanity for the conduct they observed; and fearful that it might draw on them the resentment of the English, who with a single frigate could destroy their whole trade in the Red Sea: they obliged all the Englishmen who were then at Cairo to bind themselves, under the penalty of a considerable sum, that no steps should be taken to revenge what had happened, making them find a merchant who resided at Cairo to be surety for them.

No christian ships have come to Suez since this affair: a frigate with dispatches from India came to Cosire about eighteen months ago; but the person charged with them being contraband, was imprisoned here by the Pacha, and sent to Constantinople; for the Firman not only forbids foreign ships, and particularly English, from approaching the port of Suez, but all christians, declaring, "That the sea of Suez was designed for "the noble pilgrimage of Mecca; and that the "port thereof is a port of two illustrious cities, "which are those that make the light of the "truth to shine, and the law of the prophet; and "are established to promote religion and justice,

" Mecca the enlightened, and Medina the hon-
" oured; wherefore, it ſays, let ſuch chriſtians as
" come there, be impriſoned, and their effects
" confiſcated; and let no one endeavour to ſet
them free." I have been thus, you ſee, ignorantly running into a danger that I was not aware of, and am here on ſuſpicious ground; but I am told that having come to Suez in a ſhip of the country, and travelling in a private way, I ſhall eſcape unnoticed, however, I promiſe you, my ſtay will not be long unleſs *per force*; at all riſques I muſt ſee the pyramids, and then I hope to quit Cairo, and ſhortly after, the land of Egypt.

The inferior ſtation which the Franks, as we are termed, hold in this country, has already diſguſted me againſt it: among other proofs thereof, is one of which I daily experience the humiliating effect, being obliged to ride about the city on a jack-aſs, while the Muſſulmen are mounted on moſt beautiful Arab horſes: it is not only from being debarred the privilege of riding an horſe, though that is mortifying, but from the general oppreſſion prevailing here, and the particular contempt in which the chriſtians are held by theſe people, that I am ſurprized a ſingle one ſhould be found amongſt them. But avarice knows no prejudices; and man not contented with a ſufficiency braves every thing to enrich himſelf, eſteeming little the ſacrifice of each generous feeling provided wealth does but follow. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Cairo, May 7, 1782.

DEAR FRIEND.

I SET out from hence the day before yesterday, accompanied by a party of friends to view the pyramids.

We left Cairo in the afternoon mounted on jackasses, which convey'd us to Bulac, the port belonging to this place, and there embarked on the Nile for Giza, a voyage of about a league; it stands higher up on the other side of the river, and is opposite to Old Cairo; some travellers have asserted that it is on the scite of the antient Memphis but without just grounds.

Being arrived there we found a house by the water-side prepared for our reception and stored with a plenteous supply of viands and liquors, for which accommodations we were indebted to some

ſome Italian gentlemen ſettled at Cairo. Our firſt buſineſs was to find the Scheik of the tribe of Arabs inhabiting the environs of Giza and the pyramids, to let him know our intentions of going thither in the morning and ſecure his company as a protection to us; accordingly we diſpatched an embaſſador who returned accompanied by the Scheik: ſome of our party were well acquainted with him as he had attended them before on the like occaſion and welcomed him into our preſence with a bumper of brandy, to which though a Muſſulman he ſhowed no repugnance, but drank near a bottle and after we had adjuſted all preliminaries reſpecting our next day's motions, he retired.

It having been agreed that we ſhould ſet off at three o'clock in the morning, the Scheik attended by an aid de camp, waited on us at that hour, and being provided with a number of wax candles, neceſſary for examining the inſide of the pyramid, and with all other requiſites, we mounted our jack-aſſes. We arrived at the foot of the pyramids at day-break, by which means they opened to us all at once appearing ſtill more vaſt in that ambiguous light, and I know not whether my aſtoniſhment and ſatisfaction were greater, on thus ſuddenly viewing thoſe ſtupendous fabricks, or afterwards in minutely

nutely examining their ſeveral parts and conſtruction.

After having gazed at them with wonder for ſome time we prepared to pry into the inmoſt receſſes of the larger pyramid into which only of the three there is an entrance; having lighted our candles we crept in at a ſmall aperture in one of the ſides about one fourth of the way up from the baſe of the pyramid: crawling along on our hands and knees for ſome way down a ſloping and rugged path we came to the lower apartment, where diſcovering nothing that engaged our curioſity we ſoon left it, and aſcended by a more regular paſſage up to the great chamber: being arrived there we found it a ſpacious well-proportioned room, at one end is a tomb or ſarcophagos of Granite thought to have contained the body of the prince who built this pyramid as his ſepulchral monument: the chamber is lined with granite throughout, the cieling being formed of nine long ſtones: this room is thirty-ſix feet long, eighteen feet wide, and twenty feet high; the ſarcophagus is ſeven feet long, four feet wide, and four feet deep. There is a room above this but no way to go up to it. There is likewiſe ſuppoſed to be one below that which we firſt went into; the way to it is by a deep kind of hole or well which probably leads down to the iſland, formed by the water of the Nile at the

time

time of the annual inundation, according to Herodotus's account, who ſays that there was a tomb on the iſland.

Having attentively viewed theſe inner regions we crept out again half choaked with duſt and almoſt ſuffocated with the cloſeneſs of the air: after a ſhort repoſe we ſcaled the ſides of the pyramid, which have the appearance of a flight of ſteps or rows of benches decreaſing to a point, for the original ſmooth and poliſhed ſurface having mouldered away; the ſtones placed in regular rows, bear the form I deſcribe, ſerving by that means as ſteps to the very ſummit from whence the view is extenſive and noble, taking in the Nile and fertile country on each ſide of it's banks for a conſiderable tract, numberleſs villages, Old Cairo, Giza, the pyramids of Sacara, where are the catacombs, &c. &c. Although there are pyramids without number ſcattered all over the country, yet theſe are the three that we call emphatically *the* pyramids, and are here termed *El Haram di Giza* from their vicinity to that place; they ſtand about nine miles from the banks of the Nile and on the verge of the fertile country, being placed on elevated ground up to the foot of which the water flows on the annual inundation; they are of different ſizes: The large one according to Greaves's meaſurement is 700 feet ſquare, covering

ing about eleven acres of ground; the inclined plane is equal to the baſe, ſo that the angles and baſe make an equi-lateral triangle; the perpendicular height is 500 feet. The apex is thirteen feet ſquare.

The ſecond pyramid ſtands on as much ground as the firſt, but is forty feet lower.

The baſe of the ſmalleſt is 300 feet ſquare, and it's perpendicular altitude is eighty feet.

The ruins of their original ſurfaces lay round the baſes of the pyramids and diminiſh in a ſlight degree the effect of their grandeur, as in ſome parts they form a mound covering a quarter of the pyramid which would appear much more noble if cleared of that rubbiſh; the original ſurfaces of the two larger appear to have been formed of common ſtones, but that of the ſmaller one was compoſed of beautiful red granite, as may be ſeen by the broken heaps thereof laying ſcattered around the baſe, and by ſome ſmall portions of the outer cruſt remaining on the ſurface. Though an entrance has been diſcovered only into the larger of the three, yet moſt probably there is a way into both the others, and likewiſe apartments in them, ſince Strabo tells us, that in the middle of the pyramids, there is a ſtone which may be taken out to open a paſ-

ſage to the tombs: attempts have been made, but without effect, to diſcover an entrance into the ſecond, a great breach appearing in one of the ſides of it.

No certain accounts are given either of the times when, or the kings by whom theſe extraordinary fabricks were built: Herodotus indeed ſpeaks poſitively as to the founders of them, but other authors give different accounts, and the whole is uncertain: they are without doubt moſt wonderful objects conſidered both with regard to their antiquity, ſize, and conſtruction; the labour in raiſing them muſt have been immenſe, as they are a ſolid maſs of ſtones, with only a few ſmall ſpaces left to form thoſe apartments where the bodies of the kings were laid: the materials were moſt probably brought from Upper Egypt on floats to the very foot of them. Pliny tells us, that three hundred and ſixteen thouſand men were employed twenty years in raiſing the largeſt, and that the three were compleated in ſixty-eight years. Near to theſe are ſeveral ſmaller pyramids; and round the area, on which the larger ones ſtand, are a number of receſſes and cells in the rock, with hieroglyphick inſcriptions over their entrances.

In front of the pyramids towards the Nile, and where the grand approach to them appears formerly

formerly to have been, is placed the famous figure of the Sphynx, cut out of one ſolid rock; the increaſe of the ſoil and ſand has entirely buried the body, the head and neck now only appearing above the ground. The dimenſions of this figure according to Pliny, were as follows: the circumference of the head one hundred and two feet, the length of the legs one hundred and thirteen feet, the height from the bottom of the belly to the ſummit of the head ſixty-three feet, and the head and neck twenty-ſeven feet. It is ſaid to have been the tomb of Amaſis; but is more famous on account of the ænigmatical oracles delivered from it to all who went thither to conſult it, and from the ambiguous terms in which they were couched, have given riſe to the proverbial expreſſion, *Sphynx's riddles*, applied to any thing difficult to be ſolved. At the top of the head, there was originally an hole, as likewiſe on the back, from whence iſſued the anſwers, dictated by their prieſts, who were placed within.

The ſituation of the antient city of Memphis, is determined to have been between the pyramids and the catacombs of Sacara, which are ten miles diſtant from each other. Although this city was of ſo great an extent, having been eighteen miles in circuit, yet not the leaſt veſtige of it now remains.

We paſſed the morning in ſurveying the pyramids, &c. and then rode back through a rich and fertile plain to Giza, from whence we ferried over to the iſland of Rhoida: it was here that ſome authors aſſert Moſes to have been found among the ruſhes by Pharaoh's daughter; whether that was the caſe or not, I cannot pretend to determine; at preſent it is famous for a building called the Mikeaz, in which is the Nilometer or pillar placed in the centre of a pool of water of the ſame level with the river, having different gradations marked on it to determine the daily riſe and fall of the Nile: as ſoon as it begins to riſe, the officer ſuperintending the meaſurement of its altitude, reports the ſame to the Pacha, and receives handſome preſents from him on that event, which is celebrated by publick rejoicings throughout the city; its daily height is likewiſe conſtantly proclaimed by publick criers, till it arrives at the wiſhed-for point, when the mound of the canal, deſigned to diſtribute its waters throughout the city, is cut with great ſolemnity and rejoicings, a virgin at the ſame time being thrown into the river as a preſent to Father Nile for his annual viſit, but it is a virgin of clay placed on the top of the mound, and on cutting it, the figure falls into the river, and is, I ſuppoſe, as acceptable to his cold embrace as if it was fleſh and blood.

The city of Cairo then becomes a ſcene of joy and feaſting, they receive the river into their ſtreets and ſquares with the utmoſt gladneſs, and boats and barges gaily adorned are ſeen rowing on lakes and canals, which the day before were dry land; it is then that this city muſt appear in its greateſt glory, at preſent I can ſay little for its magnificence, though its ſize and population are very conſiderable; the circuit thereof is ſeven miles, the houſes exceſſively high and ſtreets very narrow, not being wider than our alleys in London, and are always full of people, moſt of them being mounted, the Turks of faſhion on horſeback, Chriſtians and Plebeians on jack-aſſes: to the extreme height of the houſes they add every other contrivance poſſible to exclude the ſun, placing over from the tops of the houſes on one ſide of the ſtreet to thoſe of the other, canvas ſtrained on frames, whereby the ſtreets are very much darkened and the ſun totally excluded, one advantage in this hot country, but then on the other hand, by that means the air is rendered cloſe and ſuffocating.

In a country where the ſky is ever ſerene and plenty dwells, diffuſed throughout by the Nile, whoſe periodical inundations produce rich harveſts, of all kinds of grain, and fruits, wafting up from the Mediterranean, the produce of other nations; one is prepared for a

proſ-

proſpect of univerſal chearfulneſs and content, but two curſes, the ſevereſt that can poſſibly befall a nation, turn this flattering outſide into real miſery; the moſt oppreſſive ſyſtem of tyranny in the world, and the deſtructive ravages made by the plague, are two ſources from whence flow the evils of this unfortunate country, the latter is a temporary one; the former invariably ſubſiſts, and from it the people know no reſpite; while the latter rages they lock themſelves up in their houſes and have no communication with each other, but houſes are no refuge againſt the firſt, and a deſpotic Bey ſeizes on property, and deals out death according to his own pleaſure and caprice. I hardly know how to explain to you the form of government here, it is of ſo ſtrange and complicated a nature: on one hand the Pacha or Vice-Roy ſent by the Grand Signor, to whom the country is tributary, claims the ſovereignty; on the other, the twenty-four Beys maintain their authority, each of whom exerciſes an independant power, and by that means there are twenty-five eſtabliſhed tyrants, every one of them diſpenſing juſtice or injuſtice according to his pleaſure, being under no controul. This government of the Beys is called likewiſe the Mamaluke government, or government of the ſlaves, being formed of Georgian ſlaves, who are ſold when young into the families of the Beys and by them trained up to arms, amongſt whom, ſuch as

have

have moſt ſpirit and addreſs riſe in their turns to be Beys; little attention being paid to the cultivation of the mind they are extremely ignorant, few of them being able to write or read. The election of a Bey is generally attended with bloodſhed, for as there are many who have pretenſions, the ſword commonly determines the right; Ibrahim Bey has placed himſelf at the head of the government, and by dint of a large army keeps the others in ſome awe, enriching himſelf by rapine and plunder. In ſhort, the ſcene of oppreſſion that exiſts here is a diſgrace to human nature, both in thoſe who practiſe and thoſe who ſuffer it; but the languid and effeminate ſpirit of the native Egyptians, having always made them a prey to foreign maſters, invites that tyranny which it wants the courage to reſiſt. Adieu.

LETTER XI.

Cairo,

DEAR FRIEND.

I LITTLE imagined, when I made thoſe obſervations in my laſt, reſpecting the oppreſſion and tyranny of this government, that I ſhould in my own perſon ſo ſoon give proof of what I there advanced; but thus it happened, and the following adventure which I met with, may ſerve to give you a tolerable idea of Egyptian equity.

In one of my rides about the city, I was met by a party of Turkiſh ſoldiers, who accoſting *me*, and ſome European friends who were of my party, ſaid, that by order of their maſter Muſtapha Bey, they were come in ſearch of us, and that they muſt immediately conduct us to him. We did not at all reliſh this ſalutation, and would gladly have been excuſed the honor of paying a viſit to a Bey,

but

but having no alternative, we proceeded quietly under their eſcort. We were not, you may be ſure, extremely comfortable in this ſituation; and in our way endeavoured to devine the cauſe of it, but in vain: we found we had nothing elſe to do but ſubmit patiently, and wait the event. Being arrived at the Bey's palace, my companions were ſet at liberty, and *I* only was detained; one of my friends however ſtayed with me to act as interpreter, and plead my cauſe. We were now uſhered into the preſence chamber, and found this Potentate ſitting croſs-legged on a carpet, ſmoking a pipe ſeven or eight feet long; he was a middle-aged man, rather corpulent, had a black and buſhy beard that reached below his breaſt, and his countenance was handſome, although ſtern and ſevere; his myrmidons who were bearded like himſelf, ſtood in a circle round him, into the midſt of which we were introduced.

The Bey, being informed that I was the perſon whom he had ſummoned, ſurveyed me attentively, and with an imperious tone of voice, pronounced my crime and my ſentence in the ſame breath, telling me, an Armenian merchant having repreſented to him, that an Engliſhman, who had paſſed through Cairo two years before, owed him a ſum of money, his orders were that I ſhould immediately diſcharge the debt incurred by my countryman. I heard with aſtoniſhment this ex-

traordinary charge and verdict, and in reply endeavoured to explain the hardship and injustice of such a proceeding, telling him, that in the first place, I doubted much whether the debt claimed by the Armenian was just, and in the second, supposing that it was, did not consider myself by any means bound to discharge it; but all endeavours to exculpate myself on the principles of reason or justice were totally useless, since he soon removed all my arguments by a short decision, which was, that without further ceremony, I must either consent to pay the money or remain prisoner in his castle. I began then to enquire what the sum was, which the Armenian pretended to be due to him, and found it to be near five hundred pounds, at which price, high as it was, I believe I should have been induced to have purchased my liberty, had not my friend advised me to the contrary, and given me hopes that it might be obtained without it, recommending to me rather to suffer a temporary confinement than submit to so flagrant an extortion. Accordingly I protested against paying the money, and was conducted under a guard into a room where I remained in arrest.

It was about noon, the usual time of dining in this country, and a very good pilau with mutton was served up to me; in short I was very civilly treated in my confinement, but still it was a confinement,

finement, and as such, could not fail of being extremely unpleasant: my only hopes were founded in the good offices of Mr. R——— an Italian merchant, whose services to me and many of my countrymen, who have been embroiled in affairs of the like nature here, deserve our warmest gratitude.

My apartment was pleasantly situated, with a fine view of the Nile and a rich country; but I should have enjoyed the prospect much more upon another occasion. On a kind of lawn, shaded with trees, in front of the castle, two or three hundred horses stood at picquet, richly caparisoned, belonging to the Bey and his guards. His principal officers and slaves came to visit me, and in talking over my case, they agreed that it was very hard, but to comfort me said, that their master was a very good Prince, and would not keep me long confined. I found several of them pleasant liberal-minded men, and we conversed together very sociably through my Arabian servant, who remained with me.

The people in this country always sleep after dinner till near four o'clock, they then rise, wash and pray; that time of prayer is called by them *Asser*, and is the common hour of visiting; the Beys then give audience, and transact business: Mustapha Bey now sent for me again, and seeming

ing to be in good humour, endeavoured to coax me into payment of the demand he made; but I continued firm in my refuſal, on which he changed the ſubject, and ſmiling, aſked me if I ſhould not like to be a Muſſulman, telling me it was much better than being a Chriſtian, and hinted that I ſhould be very well off if I would become one of them, and ſtay at Cairo, uſing likewiſe other arguments to effect my converſion, and all this in a jocular laughing manner: while he was proceeding in his endeavours to bring me over to his faith, two officers came from Ibrahim Bey to procure my releaſe. I have before told you that he is the chief Bey, and luckily Mr. R——— having very good intereſt with him, had made application in my behalf, and in conſequence thereof theſe two ambaſſadors were ſent to requeſt that Muſtapha Bey would deliver me up to them; but he ſeemed by no means inclinable ſo to do, and reſuming his former ſternneſs of look remained for ſome time inexorable; till at length wrought on by their entreaties, he conſented to let me go, obſerving at the ſame time that whenever he had an opportunity of making a little money, Ibrahim Bey always interfered and prevented him; a pretty obſervation! From which you may infer, that they look upon *us* as fair plunder, and do not give themſelves much trouble to find out a pretence on which to found their claims.

The

The Engliſh ſeem particularly to have been victims to this ſpecies of rapine, owing, I believe, to the facility, with which they always ſubmit to it: and many of our wealthy countrymen having returned by this road laden with the ſpoils of India, theſe Beys have frequently fleeced them, allured by the temptation of that wealth, which theſe Nabobs are ſo fond of diſplaying: various are the inſtances of extortions practiſed on them. You may form an idea of all, when I mention one of a gentleman who paſſing by Suez in his way to England, that he might not be detained there by the ſearching of his baggage, prevailed on the Cuſtom-houſe officers to diſpenſe therewith, and only put their ſeals on his trunks to exempt them from being viſited till his arrival at Cairo, where being come, fatigued with his journey, and impatient to ſhift himſelf, he would not wait for the inſpection of the officers, but broke the ſeals to get his clothes, and paid a thouſand pounds for the luxury of a clean ſhirt an hour before he otherwiſe would have had it.

When I hear of the heavy fines that have been levied on my countrymen in their paſſage through Egypt, I conſider myſelf very fortunate in being quit for a confinement of only a few hours and fifty pounds given in fees to different people employed in the taſk of procuring my releaſe.

From

From Muſtapha Bey's palace I was conducted to that of Ibrahim Bey, being attended by an officer of the former who was ſent with me. Ibrahim was ſitting in a ſmall apartment richly furniſhed, ſmoking his pipe, and was accompanied by two other Turks; he appeared to be between forty and fifty years of age, middle-ſized and handſome; he is reckoned a man of ability, indeed he has ſhown himſelf to be ſuch, by having managed with dexterity the complicated machine which he directs. He addreſſed himſelf to Muſtapha Bey's officer, inveighing ſeverely againſt the conduct of his maſter, then turning to me, ſaid that I might depend on his protection during the remainder of my ſtay in that country; and finding that my purpoſe was to go down the Nile and to Alexandria, he gave me a paſſport to exempt me from any trouble or moleſtation I might receive on my paſſage from his General Morad Bey, who was ſtationed on the banks of the Nile with the army, for the purpoſe of raiſing contributions on the country. Having made my proper acknowledgments to this Prince for his civilities I retired not a little rejoiced to have regained my liberty.

Owing to this kind of rapine and extortion practiſed by theſe potentates, and likewiſe to a Firman of the Grand Signor, which forbids European ſhips to approach the port of Suez, this channel

channel of communication betwixt Europe and India has been ſhut for ſome years paſt; a circumſtance extremely detrimental to us, ſince it is by far the moſt expeditious way of conveying intelligence, and by proper management might ſtill be made uſe of for that purpoſe: ſome preſents annually ſent by the India Company to my deliverer Ibrahim Bey, who is in fact the king of that country, would enſure ſafety to their ſervants, who might paſs charged with diſpatches; and when you hear that the paſſage has been made from London to Madraſs in ſixty-three days by way of Suez, you will be ſurprized that ſuch an advantage ſhould be overlooked, if poſſible to be obtained; not that I think it would be adviſeable to make it a common road for paſſengers, or permit any other ſhips to go to Suez, but ſmall packet boats for the purpoſe of conveying diſpatches; for otherwiſe a door would be opened to a contraband trade, which would prove extremely prejudicial to the commerce of the India Company, and the revenue of our government.

Mr. R——— received me on my return to his houſe with the ſtrongeſt expreſſions of joy and friendſhip, and I endeavoured to teſtify to him with equal warmth how ſenſible I was of the ſervice he had rendered me. This gentleman who poſſeſſes a mind far too liberal for the country in which he reſides, has been ſettled here for many

years, and acquired an handſome fortune, though he has frequently been ſqueezed by the Beys; at preſent he finds the advantage of paying one, to be protected againſt the extortions of the others: he is extremely attached to the Engliſh, and has often been of great ſervice to them in this city.

Hadge Coſſim, who is a Turk, and one of the richeſt merchants in Cairo had interceded in my behalf with Ibrahim Bey, at the inſtance of his ſon, who had been on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and came from Juddah in the ſame ſhip with me. The Father in celebration of the ſon's return, gave a moſt magnificent fête on the evening of the day of my captivity, and as ſoon as I was releaſed, ſent to invite me to partake of it, and I accordingly went. His company was very numerous, conſiſting of three or four hundred Turks, who were all ſitting on ſophas and benches, ſmoking their long pipes; the room in which they were aſſembled, was a ſpacious and lofty hall, in the centre of which was a band of muſick compoſed of five Turkiſh inſtruments, and ſome vocal performers; as there were no ladies in the aſſembly, you may ſuppoſe, it was not the moſt lively party in the world, but being new to me, was for that reaſon entertaining.

Both

Both on account of my nation, and my recent adventure with the Bey, I was a kind of ſight to them, and they aſked me numberleſs queſtions, at the ſame time being extremely civil, and ſeveral of them, as a great compliment, taking their pipes out of their mouths, and offering them to me to ſmoke; although the indelicacy of this cuſtom was ſomewhat diſguſting, yet in conformity to their manners, I took their pipes, ſmoked two or three whiffs, and returned them; they look upon it as the civilleſt thing they can do to a ſtranger or viſitor, to offer him the diſh of coffee they themſelves are ſipping, or the pipe they are ſmoking, which it would be the height of ill manners in any one to refuſe. Our ſupper was ſerved at twelve o'clock, and conſiſted of ſweet-meats, paſtry and ſherbets, ſerved on ſilver waiters placed on the carpet, around which we formed ourſelves in different parties of five or ſix in each: we did not continue long at table, and immediately as our repaſt was finiſhed, the company broke up.

In walking home through the ſtreets, I could not but obſerve the good police which ſeems to prevail here, each diſtrict or ward of the city is ſhut up ſeparately within gates, and no one is ever ſuffered to ſtir out after dark without a lanthorn, on pain of being taken up and impriſoned;

a patrole of Janiſſaries goes the rounds frequently in the night; ſo that I ſhould think with theſe precautions few enormities are ever commmitted.

My late adventure has made me particularly impatient to quit this country, where perſonal property and perſonal liberty are held ſo light; and I ſhall accordingly ſet off to-morrow morning, having engaged a boat, and made all other neceſſary preparations for my paſſage down the Nile to Roſetta; and I hear that I am not likely to meet with Morad Bey's army, as he has left that branch of the river along which I ſhall paſs, ſo that I flatter myſelf I ſhall meet with no further hindrance or interruption in my journey. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Alexandria.

DEAR FRIEND.

THE paſſage down the Nile from Cairo to Roſetta is charming: the verdure, fertility, and abundance of the Delta of Egypt highly pleaſing.

By that name the Romans diſtinguiſhed the country laying between the outward forks of the river, into which it divides a few miles below Cairo, and makes with the ſea a figure reſembling the Greek letter Δ. From theſe two principal branches go ſeveral others, interſecting the country that lays between; and this bounteous river, after ſcattering plenty over the land, during a courſe of many hundred miles, empties itſelf into the ſea by ſeven mouths: the two moſt conſiderable are thoſe of Damiatta and Roſetta; the former

was

was the Oſtium Pathmeticum of the antients; the latter, the Oſtium Bolbitinum.

As the pyramids may juſtly be eſteemed the moſt wonderful of all the works of art, ſo the Nile may be conſidered as the greateſt natural curioſity in this country. Nature to ſupply her parſimonious diſtribution of water from the heavens upon this land, has ordained an annual overflow of the river, to water and enrich it, ſo that perpetual plenty and verdure here flouriſh without the aſſiſtance of the clouds. Tibullus with regard to Egypt ſays,

Te propter nullos tellus tua poſtulat imbres
Arida nec pluvio ſupplicat herba Jovi.
It's flocks to fatten and to ſwell it's grain,
This land from heav'n aſks not refreſhing rain.

The Nile is ſaid to riſe in the twelfth degree of North Latitude, at the foot of a great mountain, in the kingdom of Goyana, in Abyſſinia, but this is rather matter of conjecture than certainty, no exact accounts having hitherto been given of its ſource, but ſuppoſing it to be ſomewhere near the part I mentioned, its courſe being north and ſouth, and emptying itſelf into the ſea in the thirty-firſt degree of North Latitude, the whole extent thereof muſt be about one thouſand two hundred miles.

The

The annual riſe which it experiences is owing to periodical rains that fall in Abyſſinia; the river begins to ſwell at Cairo and in lower Egypt towards the latter end of June, and riſing gradually till the middle of September, decreaſes afterwards during the months of October and November: the height which it attains varies in different years, and the plenty or ſcarcity of the crops is determined thereby, when it riſes to ſixteen peeks (about thirty-two feet) the chalitz, which diſtributes the water through the city of Cairo, is opened, then, and not till then, the Grand Signor is entitled to his tribute, nor do they wiſh to ſee it much higher than that point, ſince one extreme is as fatal to this country as the other, if there is a deficiency of water, many lands are deprived of the benefit thereof, if there is a ſuper-abundance, it retires not ſoon enough for them to ſow their corn. The river at this time ſpreading itſelf over the country, on each ſide of its bed for ſeveral leagues, appears like a ſea; whatever parts lay ſo remote as to be out of reach of the inundation, are watered by canals and partly from its own beneficence, partly from what is borrowed of it by theſe canals, ſo much is expended in its courſe that it has been conjectured, that not a tenth part of its water reaches the ſea.

The appearance which Egypt preſents at that ſeaſon of the year, muſt be very ſingular and curious to one who aſcends an high building, and diſcovers a vaſt expanſe of water all around with towns and villages riſing out of the flood, here and there a cauſey, and numberleſs groves and fruit-trees whoſe tops only are viſible. When the waters retire they leave a vaſt quantity of fiſh on the land, and at the ſame time, what is much more valuable, a ſlime which acts as manure and fertilizes the fields. By this annual addition of ſoil Egypt has been very much raiſed and enlarged in the courſe of years, and many places are now inland which were formerly cloſe to the ſea, ſuch particularly is Damiatta; and as the mud of the Nile extends for ſome leagues into the ſea, and accumulates every year, this country by little and little annually increaſes.

The Arts, Mythology, and Natural Hiſtory of Antient Egypt, form a ſubject ſo worthy the attention and ſtudy of the curious, that they cannot have eſcaped your's; I need not therefore dwell on the ſuperſtition or ſingular worſhip formerly practiſed here, addreſſed to bulls, ſerpents, crocodiles, birds, fiſh of different kinds, and even the pulſe and roots of the garden, all which they deified. I need not tell you that amongſt other uſeful inventions for which

plant

we are indebted to this country, is paper, made of a plant called Papyrus, or Byblos, that grew near Memphis. You well know the miraculous effects aſcribed by the poets to the plant Lotus, this was an Egyptian root, and uſed by way of bread.

I will not recapitulate to you ſubjects you are well acquainted with, but return to Roſetta, a very pleaſant city ſtanding cloſe to the Nile, in the midſt of gardens and orange groves. I took mules from thence, and riding cloſe by the ſea for about fifteen miles, came to the moſt weſterly branch of the Nile, croſſing it a little above the Oſtium Canopicum, after which appeared the caſtle of Bekier, ſtanding cloſe to the ſea on the ſcite of the antient Canopus, a city notorious for the debauchery and diſſoluteneſs that prevailed there; travelling on a few miles further, through a ſandy country thickly planted with date-trees, I came to the ruins of the antient Nicopolis, ſituated on an hill; this city was built by Auguſtus, and received its name in commemoration of a victory gained by him over Anthony; a league more brought me hither.

The city of Alexandria founded by Alexander the Great, and afterwards ſo much admired and adorned by the Romans, the re-

ſidence of Cleopatra, and refuge of Anthony, once famous for its magnificence, luxury, and learning, is now become an undiſtinguiſhable heap of ruins; baths, palaces, porticos, and amphitheatres lay promiſcuouſly jumbled together. The ſavage rage of the Saracens when they took it, has reduced it to this miſerable ſtate; but a circumſtance more to be lamented than any other, was the deſtruction of the famous Ptolemean Library, containing one hundred thouſand volumes. On taking the city, the general ſent to the Caliph, to know his orders reſpecting thoſe books, who returned for anſwer, by all means to burn them, for if they were agreeable to the Alcoran they were ſuperfluous, and if contrary to it, impious; accordingly the Muſſulmen applied them to the purpoſe of heating their baths, and it was ſix months before they were conſumed.

Pompey's pillar is an object the moſt ſtriking of any now extant; it is ſituated on an eminence a quarter of a mile to the ſouthward of the walls, and is of red granite: the height of the ſhaft is ninety feet, and diameter thereof nine feet, the whole height of the column is one hundred and fourteen feet, the capital is of the Corinthian order; I muſt not omit mentioning to you the manner by which ſome Engliſh maſters of ſhips contrived to get to the top of it; they flew a kite over the pillar in ſuch a direction, that when the

the ſtring was looſed to let it fall and the kite came to the ground, the ſtring lay acroſs the top of the pillar, by means of which they paſſed ropes over, and making ſhrouds the ſame as to the maſt of a ſhip, they went up triumphantly, drinking a bowl of punch on the ſummit, and diſcovering that there had formerly been a pedeſtrian ſtatue on it, a piece of the foot remaining.

There are two obeliſks called Cleopatra's, having perhaps been part of the ornaments of her palace, which ſtood near the ſea ſide, one of them is overthrown and lays half buried in the ſand, the other is ſtill ſtanding, and is ſixty-three feet high, on each ſide are hieroglyphicks. They ſhew ſome ſubterranean apartments, and call them Catacombs, but I think it more probable from their form, that they were baths, and the increaſe of the ground occaſioned by the ruins, has buried them; ſo great has been the havock that there is not another pile remaining, ſufficiently entire, to mark its original form or purpoſe, even the Pharos, reckoned one of the wonders of the world, has nothing now to repreſent it but a Turkiſh fort built on the ſame ſpot, and probably out of its ruins.

Many curious antiques, ſuch as medals, rings, and ſmall ſtatues, have occaſionally been picked

up amongſt the ruins, and numberleſs others of value might be found could permiſſion be obtained to dig, but ſo jealous are theſe people of the Chriſtians, who they ſuppoſe have no other view in viſiting theſe places but to find hidden treaſures, that it is often dangerous to look at them.

The preſent city does not ſtand on the ſcite of the antient Alexandria, but on a portion of ground that was called the Hepta-Stadium, and lay without the walls; it is a kind of Peninſula ſituated between the two ports, that to the weſtward was called by the antients the Portus Eunoſtus, now the Old Port, and is by far the beſt, Turkiſh veſſels only are allowed to anchor there: the other called the New Port is for the Chriſtians; at the extremity of one of the arms of which ſtood the famous Pharos.

Hiſtorians tell us that Alexander's body was embalmed, and buried in this city in a coffin of gold, which (as one can eaſily ſuppoſe) was taken away and it was put into one of glaſs, being preſerved therein ſo late as to the time of Auguſtus, who took a view of it in that ſtate, adorned it with a golden crown, and wept over it.

I have

I have now been here near a month, a daily witneſs of the ſad revolution that has taken place in men, manners, arts, and learning at Alexandria; too long a time to dwell on an unpleaſing picture. I embark to-morrow on board a ſhip bound to Tunis, which will paſs by Malta, and and ſet me on ſhore at that iſland; the quarantine being ſhorter than at any of the ports of Italy. I ſhall be happy to communicate to you, the account of my arrival there. Adieu.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Lazaret of Leghorn, Auguſt 15, 1782.

DEAR FRIEND.

BEING at length landed in Europe I delay not a moment to impart an event ſo pleaſing, and at the ſame time give you the ſequel of my wanderings.

I embarked on board a neutral veſſel at Alexandria, the maſter of which inſtead of ſhaping a direct courſe for the port he was bound to, run up amongſt the iſlands of the Archipelago, according to the practice of thoſe Mediterranean ſailors, who always keep the land cloſe aboard, and on the appearance of a black cloud make for the firſt harbour that preſents itſelf; had he carried me the tour of the Grecian iſlands and ſet me on ſhore at thoſe we paſſed, I could have borne more patiently the tedioufneſs of our voyage, but I confeſs that a diſtant view did not ſufficiently

ficiently compenſate for that unpleaſing circumſtance; the only one which I had an opportunity of viſiting was Rhodes, where we put in for a day or two.

The famous Coloſſus now no longer beſtrides the entrance of the harbour, no beautiful villas adorn its ſhores, no palaces grace the city, no Romans now reſide here; its natural beauties however ſtill remain, but in the hands of Turks who are not much given to improvement, and practiſe no arts but thoſe of oppreſſion, as the Chriſtian inhabitants ſeverely feel. The town ſtill bears the marks of that memorable ſiege it once ſuſtained, when the knights of St. John of Jeruſalem, headed by Villers de Liſle Adam, Grand Maſter, made a gallant ſtand againſt the arms of Solyman the Magnificent, who beſieged the place with two hundred thouſand men, and four hundred ſhips; the brave garriſon conſiſting only of five thouſand ſoldiers, and ſix hundred knights, was, after a ſix months ſiege, during which they had made frequent ſallies, and given incredible proofs of valour, obliged to capitulate from a total want of proviſions and every kind of ſtore; the knights afterwards ſettled at Malta, given to them by the Emperor Charles V. as ſome kind of recompence for having with-held his aſſiſtance in ſo critical a conjuncture.

The

The ſurrounding country appeared extremely pleaſant and fruitful, but the ſhortneſs of our ſtay did not allow me to penetrate into it, or even viſit the ſpot where that city ſtood which the Romans ſo much admired, and where they uſed to paſs their time in elegant retirement; it was ſituated about a league to the northward of the preſent city, on a bank ſloping down to the ſea, but few veſtiges of it now remain. There is a convent of Catholick Monks at Rhodes, to whoſe hoſpitality all Chriſtians who touch there are much indebted.

After leaving this iſland we ſteered for the coaſt of Candia, the antient Crete, and on approaching it diſcovered a very lofy mountain, that I conjectured to be mount Ida; we ſailed from one extremity of this iſland to the other, and were often very near the ſhore. From Candia we ſtretched on to the Capes of the Morea and the iſle of Serigo, formerly Cythera, and then quitting the Archipelago, ſtood over towards Malta; but as we had loſt ſight of land for a few days, and did not keep the beſt of reckonings, we miſſed that iſland, and contrary to my wiſhes and expectations, I was carried on to Tunis, on the coaſt of Barbary.

In approaching that city we ſailed up a deep bay, anſwering exactly the deſcription given of it by Virgil, in his Æneid.

Eſt

Eſt in feceſſu longo locus ; inſula portum
Efficit objectu laterum : quibus omnis ab alto
Frangitur inq. ſinus ſcindit ſeſe unda reductos.

Within a long receſs there lies a bay,
An iſland ſhades it from the rolling ſea,
And forms a poſt ſecure for ſhips to ride,
Broke by the jutting land on either ſide.

DRYDEN.

We came to an anchor at the upper end thereof, near the caſtle of the Goletta, and paſſed in the boat through a narrow canal into an extenſive baſon, on which ſtands Tunis; the water in it is ſo ſhallow, that we were frequently aground in our paſſage up to the city, which is twelve miles diſtant from the road where the ſhips lay.

Though I can ſay nothing in favour of the town, yet the country is pleaſant and abounds in a great variety of productions, moſt of which are ſhipped off for Europe. Trade and piracy here enrich the people, the latter they carry on very ſucceſsfully againſt all the petty ſtates of the Mediterranean, whoſe naval force is not ſufficiently powerful to cruſh them; they go in ſmall gallies mounting a few ſwivels, to the number of fifty or ſixty men in each, armed with firelocks and cutlaſſes, and as theſe veſſels ſail extremely faſt, and alſo row twenty or thirty oars, they are equally prepared to eſcape or overtake as occaſion may require. Among other

valuable articles brought in by the Corſairs, are their priſoners; who are ſold in the public market, and fetch very high prices; theſe poor wretches then groan under a miſerable ſlavery during the remainder of their lives, except ſuch as not being ſcrupulous in matters of faith, prefer Mahometan liberty to Chriſtian bondage and become Muſſulmen. But I am told that the ſlaves are treated much better at Tunis than any where elſe, indeed the people themſelves are far more civilized than thoſe of the other Barbary ſtates, moſt likely owing to the great commerce and intercourſe they have with Europeans.

I own I was much ſtruck with the liberty there enjoyed, and the ſecurity with which one might travel about the country, circumſtances very different from what I had met with in Arabia and Egypt, where, if you ſtir but out of a town you are ſure to be ſtripped, and are lucky to eſcape unwounded and alive, but at Tunis you may take your horſe, and ſtroll from one end of the kingdom to the other, which I ſhould certainly have done, if my conſtitution had been equal to combat with the heat of the climate; conceive what it muſt have been when we ſhut up windows and doors to exclude the air that in other countries we court, and when the thermometer expoſed thereto roſe higher than 100.

The

The Bagrada, Utica and Zowan are deſerving notice, but my attention was confined to the ſcite and ruins of the famous city of Carthage, which, from the luſtre it once maintained, the generals it produced, and the three long and bloody wars it ſuſtained againſt its more ſucceſsful rival Rome; add to all theſe circumſtances, that it is the ſcene of the moſt intereſting part of the Æneid, I could not but venerate as claſſick ground.

The Engliſh conſul, to whoſe politeneſs and hoſpitality I was much indebted, carried me to his country houſe at Merſa, about ten miles from Tunis, ſtanding on the ſcite of part of the antient city of Carthage; I ſpent a few days there with him very agreeably, and in the cool of the mornings and evenings amuſed myſelf with ſtrolling about and tracing as well as I could the ruins and extent of that famous city: but the dreadful ſentence pronounced againſt it in the Roman ſenate, has been ſo fully accompliſhed, that nothing now remains to give one an idea of it's antient grandeur: piles of ruins may be ſeen all along the ſhore from the caſtle of the Goletta to Cape Carthage, and ſo on to Cape Gomert; and ſeveral appear under water, having the form of walls or wharfs, which the ſea, by encroaching on the land has overwhelmed. Antient authors tell us, that this city was eighteen leagues in circuit; but that ſpace is now covered with corn-fields, vineyards,

and gardens, with here and there a maſs of ruins appearing.

The Byrſa retains ſtill the appearance of its former ſtrength, the ground falling every way with great declivity from the ſummit, on which there is a ruin ſomething in the ſhape of a tower: ſubterranean vaults are to be ſeen in every part of the country thereabouts; the moſt perfect and curious remains of antiquity, are the ciſterns placed on an eminence to the northward of the Byrſa; theſe are large canals, that were deſigned as reſervoirs to ſupply the city with water: there are ſeventeen of them, each being one hundred feet in length, twenty in breadth, and ten deep; at one corner is a ruin, appearing to have been a dome, and moſt probably there was the like at each of the other three corners; the aquæduct which brought the water to them was ninety miles in extent, and begun at the foot of a lofty mountain called Zowan; it may be traced all the way by its ruins, and in ſome places the arches ſtill remain entire.

Several villages are ſcattered about on the antient ſcite of this city, viz. El Merſa cloſe by the ſea, Melcha under ground, thoſe ſubterranean apartments in which the people live, having formerly been vaults to the Carthaginian houſes that ſtood there: Darilſhut near the Goletta, and Seedy

Seedy Mosaid standing on the promontory called Cape Carthage, it is a pleasant hill covered with vineyards and plantations of olive trees, &c. but being sacred on account of a Mahometan saint buried there, must not be profaned by christian feet; a *propos* of those saints I ought to inform you, that the Mussulmen canonize those to whom nature has denied reason, paying them the greatest respect when alive, and venerating them when dead; they walk about stark naked, and whatever extravagancies they commit, are overlooked.

You will not be surprized that so little now remains of what was once so vast a city, when you consider that the Romans after plundering, razed it, and that the fire which consumed it, lasted seventeen days. Two other cities were afterwards built near the same spot, notwithstanding the edict of the Roman senate, forbidding any revival of the name of Carthage, once so odious to them; but both have shared the fate of the first, and few traces remain of either.

The river Bagrada famous in history for that serpent of astonishing size slain on its banks by the army of Regulus, falls into the sea near Porta Farina, twenty miles to the northward of Cape Carthage; Utica is also situated on it, whither Cato retired and killed himself.

I cannot

I cannot descend from this great and interesting subject to describe the modern state of that country formerly so eminent, or quit even the ruins of antient Carthage, to dwell on the present royal palaces of Bardo and Manubia, looked on in Barbary to be *chef d'œuvres* of art and magnificence; all comparison between the present and past would be painful either to relate or hear, let me embark therefore at that port from whence Hanno, Hannibal and Hamilcar once led their victorious fleets and armies, and going on board a Raguſan ſnow, purſue my voyage along the coaſts of Sardinia and Corſica to this port, where, although a temporary priſoner, I ſubmit patiently to my captivity, ſince it is a condition annexed to my arrival in Europe, happy to have exchanged the barbarous climes of Aſia and Africa, for regions of taſte, pleaſure and refinement. Adieu.

TRANSLATION

TRANSLATION

OF A

FIRMAN of the *Ottoman Porte*.

IT is the Grand Signor's pleaſure that no Chriſtian veſſel come to Suez, or trade from Juddah to Suez openly or ſecretly. The ſea of Suez was deſigned for the noble pilgrimage of Mecca; ſuch as aſſiſt in giving a paſſage to Chriſtian veſſels, or connive at it, or uſe not their utmoſt endeavours to prevent it, are traitors to their religion, and to their Sovereign, and to all Muſſulmen; and ſuch as have the preſumption to tranſgreſs, will find their puniſhment both in this and the other world; and this expreſs command is on account of the important affairs of ſtate, and of religion. Do as we command you, with fervor

and

and zeal, let our royal mandate be thus pronounced of which this is the tenor.

(Here follow the names of the Pachas, Beys, and Governors, to whom the Firman is addreſſed.)

Be it known that the port of Suez, where the ſhips anchor, is a port of two honoured cities, which are thoſe that make the light of the truth to ſhine and the law of the prophet, and are eſtabliſhed to promote religion and juſtice, Mecca the enlightened, and Medina the honoured; and may God enoble them to the end of the world.

It hath never been cuſtomary for any ſhips of foreign nations, or for the children of darkneſs to come into the ſea of Suez, nor for Engliſh or other ſhips, to bring their cargoes beyond Juddah, till lately, when in the time of Ali Bey, a ſmall Engliſh veſſel or two came to Suez, with preſents from a perſon unknown, for the ſaid Bey, and informed him, that they were come to ſeek a freight; and having once come there, the Engliſh have therefore thought, that they could at all times do the ſame, and they have come to Suez with their ſhips laden with piece goods of India and other effects, in the time of the deceaſed Mahommed Bey, Father of Gold, who was likewiſe deceived by avarice, ſome people pointing out to him certain advantages ariſing there-

therefrom; so that, English and other ships have repeatedly come to the port of Suez.

These matters have come to our royal ears, which we hold to be contrary to the policy of our kingdom, and to religion; and we do command that from henceforwards, none of the Christians come to or approach Suez, hereby absolutely forbidding them. We have time after time, commanded them to return to their country, and have informed their ambassador thereof, enjoining him to write to his sovereign to forbid these ships to come to Suez, it being contrary to custom, and to our royal pleasure; and the ambassador has shown to us the answers he has received from his Court, and from the India Company, wherein is declared, that all travellers and merchants are strictly forbidden to approach or pass by Suez; therefore if any should disobey this order, let them be imprisoned, and their effects confiscated, and let an account thereof be sent to our illustrious Porte.

We have informed ourselves from the wise men, and those who study history, and have heard what has passed in former times from the dark policy of the Christians, who will undergo all fatigues travelling by sea and land, and they take drawings of the countries through which they pass, and keep them, that by help thereof, they

may make themſelves maſters of the kingdoms as they have done in India and other places. Memorials have likewiſe come to us on the part of the Xerif of Mecca, the much honoured, repreſenting, that theſe Chriſtians above-named, not contented with their traffick to India, have taken coffee and other merchandize from Yemen, and carried it to Suez, to the great detriment of our port of Juddah.

Seeing therefore what has happened, and our royal indignation being excited; particularly when we conſider how things are in India, by means of the Chriſtians, who for many years have undergone long voyages, and at firſt declaring themſelves to be merchants, meaning no harm or treachery, deceived the Indians, who were fools, and did not underſtand their ſubtlety and craft, and thus have taken their cities, and reduced them to ſlavery. And in the time of Talmon, with like craft, they entered the city of Damaſcus, under the maſk of merchants, who do no harm, and paying the full duties or even more. At that time it happened, that there were differences between Talmon and Labbaſon, and the Chriſtians turned them to their advantage, and made themſelves maſters of Damaſcus and Jeruſalem, and kept poſſeſſion of them for an hundred years, when Saladin appeared, to whom God give glory, and freed Damaſcus and Jeruſalem, killing

killing the Chriſtians without number. Beſides, it is well known, how great an hatred they bear to Muſſulmen on account of their religion, and ſeeing with an evil eye Jeruſalem in our hands. Thoſe therefore, who connive at the Chriſtians coming to Suez, will be puniſhed by God both in this and the other world. Permit by no means, Chriſtians or other ſhips to paſs and repaſs by Suez, but take ſuch as aſſiſt them ſecretly, and chaſtiſe them as they deſerve.

Our royal ſovereignty is powerful, and this is our Royal Mandate, when any Chriſtian ſhips, and particularly the Engliſh ſhall come to the port of Suez, impriſon the captains, and all the people, ſince they are rebels and offenders both againſt their own government and our's, according to the declaration of their ambaſſador, and according to the anſwer ſent from his Court; and they deſerve impriſonment and confiſcation of their effects, which let them find, and let no one endeavour to ſet them free.

FINIS.

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